

GHOUL TALES

MAY 50¢ K



**TERROR OF
THE DEEP**
BLOODSTONE
MEDUSA'S HEAD
**DEATH TAKES
A HOLIDAY**



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GHOULTALES

MAY 1971

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 4

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DREAM!

THE TALE I AM ABOUT TO UNFOLD IS A NIGHTMARE... SO DO NOT BE ALARMED OR SHOCKED AT WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO READ. FOR I AM TELLING YOU NOW, BEFORE I BEGIN, THAT ALL OF THIS WAS A FIGMENT OF THE IMAGINATION... A MERE FANTASY... A "DREAM."

THIS TERRIBLE NIGHTMARE CAME UPON ME WHILE I WAS WALKING ON A DESERTED STREET AT THE LOWER END OF THE CITY. IT WAS A DARK, MOONLESS NIGHT AND NOT A SINGLE LIGHT SHONE IN ANY WINDOW. IT WAS AS THOUGH THE CITY WERE DEAD...



SUDDENLY, FROM OUT OF A DARK ALLEY, THREE FIGURES LEAPED ACROSS MY PATH AND SEIZED ME. MY CRIES AND PLEADINGS FELL ON DEAF EARS. THEY MUTTERED NOT A WORD...



LET ME GO! WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME... I HAVE NO MONEY!

THEIR COLD, MENACING SILENCE ONLY HEIGHTENED MY TERROR AS THEY LED ME DOWN THE STREET, GRIPPING MY ARMS SO THAT THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY OF ESCAPE.



THEY STOPPED AT A MAN-HOLE AND ONE OF MY MYSTERIOUS ASSAILANTS PRIED UP THE COVER WITH A CROWBAR...



ONE OF THEM DESCENDED INTO THE BLACK HOLE, AND THEN I WAS THROWN ROUGHLY AFTER HIM...



THEY MARCHED ME ALONG A SERIES OF TWISTING, WINDING TUNNELS THROUGH WHICH RAN RIVERS OF SLIME AND FILTH FROM THE CITY'S SEWAGE. THE STENCH WAS UNBEARABLE...



AT TIMES THE PATH WAS SO PRECARIOUS THAT I WAS CERTAIN I COULD PROCEED NO FURTHER... BUT MY CAPTORS WERE INTENT UPON KEEPING ME ALIVE FOR WHATEVER HORRIBLE PURPOSE THEY HAD IN MIND...



AT LAST THE CAVERN TURNED SHARPLY AND WE WERE STANDING BEFORE A HUGE STEEL DOOR UPON WHICH ONE OF THE HOODED FIGURES RAPPED A SIGNAL...



THE DOOR OPENED WIDE AND I WAS NEARLY SHOCKED OUT OF MY SENSES AT WHAT I SAW...



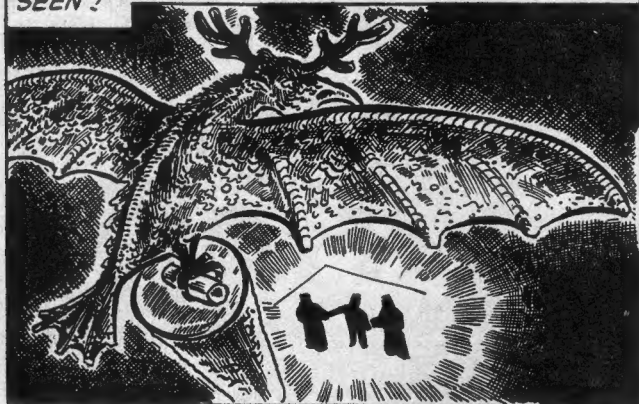
A HUNDRED PAIR OF HOSTILE EYES WERE FIXED UPON ME AS I WAS LED DOWN THE AISLE TO THE LARGE STONE ALTAR BEHIND WHICH STOOD A TALL, BEARDED MAN IN WHITE ROBES. THERE WERE NO SHOUTS OR CURSES... ONLY A DEATH-LIKE SILENCE...



BY THIS TIME I WAS TOO PARALYZED WITH FEAR TO THINK STRAIGHT... IN A DAZE I FELT MYSELF BEING FORCED TO MY KNEES. THE WHITE-ROBED PRIEST RAISED HIS ARMS AND FROM THE HOODED AUDIENCE THERE ROSE A WEIRD HUMMING... IT GREW AND SWELLED AND CHANGED KEY... RISING AND FALLING IN A TERRIBLE, TUNELESS CACOPHONY OF SOUND...



THE CHANTING CEASED ABRUPTLY AND I WAS DRAGGED FROM THE ALTAR TO A TALL PILLAR, ENGRAVED WITH STRANGE CARVINGS. AT THE TOP OF THE PILLAR WAS PERCHED A STATUE OF THE MOST HORRIBLE BEAST I HAD EVER SEEN!



MY CLOTHES WERE REMOVED, LEAVING ME STARK NAKED EXCEPT FOR A SACK-CLOTH WHICH THEY TIED ABOUT MY WAIST...



WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH ME? WHY HAVE YOU TAKEN MY CLOTHES?

MY QUESTION WAS SOON ANSWERED... THEY BOUND ME TO THE PILLAR AND THE CEREMONY BEGAN. THE LASH DESCENDED AGAIN AND AGAIN, AND EACH TIME I CRIED OUT IN PAIN, THE CROWD SENT UP AN ANSWERING MOAN IN IMITATION. THERE WAS NO MOCKERY OR DERISION IN IT... IT WAS AS THOUGH MY SCREAMS WERE A PART OF THEIR CHANT. IT WAS GHASTLY!



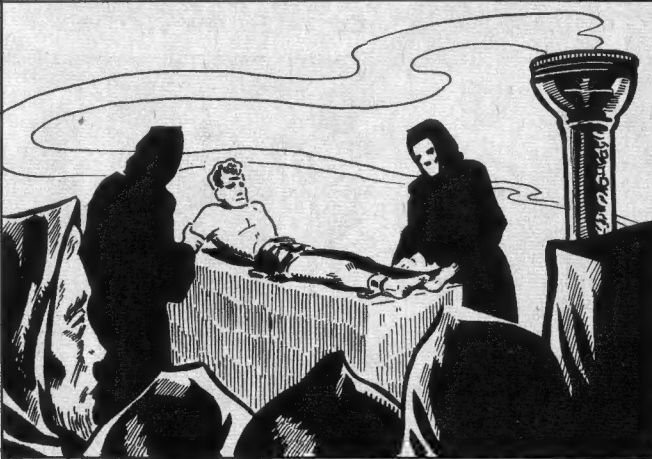
I CAN'T RECALL HOW LONG THE WHIPPING LASTED... I WAS ON THE VERGE OF FAINTING WHEN IT STOPPED. BUT MY RELIEF TURNED TO HORROR AS THEY TURNED ME ABOUT AND TIED ME AGAIN TO THE PILLAR...



THERE WAS AN UNHOLY SILENCE AS THE BRAND WAS BROUGHT CLOSER AND CLOSER TO MY FOREHEAD. THE POUNDING OF MY OWN HEART SEEMED TO BE THE ONLY SOUND IN THE ROOM. WHEN THE WHITE HOT STEEL TOUCHED MY FLESH, I SCREAMED ONCE... AND THEN LOST CONSCIOUSNESS...



BUT MY TORMENTORS DID NOT LEAVE ME IN MY WELCOME OBLIVION... THEY REVIVED ME AND PROCEEDED TO STRAP ME TO THE ALTAR. WHAT FIENDISH TORTURES THEY HAD YET IN MIND, I COULD NOT THEN IMAGINE...



BUT THEN... LOOKING UPWARD FROM MY PROSTRATE POSITION, MY EYES BEHELD THE MOST HORRIBLE OF ALL POSSIBLE HORRORS. THE BIRD WHICH I HAD THOUGHT TO BE A STATUE SUDDENLY FLAPPED ITS HUGE, BAT-LIKE WINGS, AND WITH A BLOOD-CURDLING SHRIEK, FLEW FROM ITS PERCH AND BEGAN TO DESCEND UPON ME...



I WINCED IN PAIN AS THOSE SHARP CLAWS SANK INTO MY ARM... I SCREAMED IN MORTAL AGONY AS THE AWFUL CREATURE BEGAN TEARING PIECES OF FLESH FROM MY BODY... MY FACE... MY ARMS...



AS I SANK INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS ONCE MORE, I WAS SURE THAT MY EYES WOULD NEVER AGAIN SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY...



BUT I DID AWAKEN... IMAGINE MY ASTONISHMENT AT FINDING MYSELF LYING ON THE GROUND, FULLY CLOTHED, IN FRONT OF THE ALLEY WHERE MY CAPTORS HAD FIRST SEIZED ME. SUDDENLY I BEGAN TO LAUGH, AND THE ECHO OF MY VOICE REVERBERATED LOUDLY THROUGH THE EMPTY STREETS...

I'M ALIVE... MY CLOTHES... I MUST HAVE FAINTED AND DREAMED THE WHOLE THING... AHAHAHAHAHA



SO YOU SEE... THERE IS NO NEED TO BE ALARMED. NONE OF IT REALLY HAPPENED... IT WAS ALL A TERRIBLE DREAM!



The End

MEDUSA'S HEAD



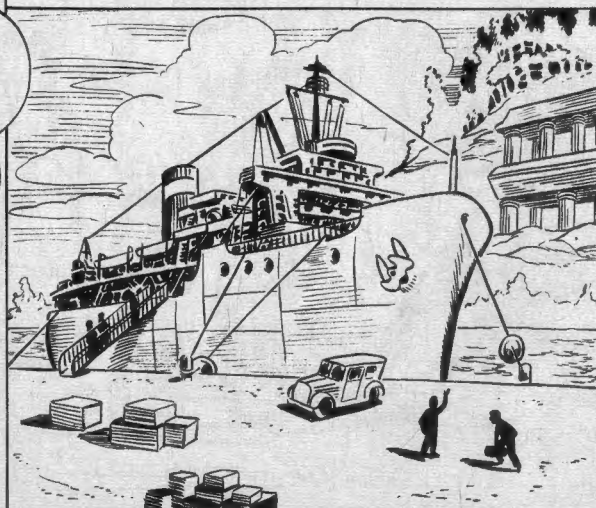
SO YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN LEGENDS! THEN YOU NEVER HEARD THE ONE ABOUT MEDUSA! FOR TO LOOK AT HER FACE, IF YOU HAD EVIL IN YOUR SOUL, WAS TO LOOK AT DEATH ITSELF! HERS WAS THE FACE OF DOOM!

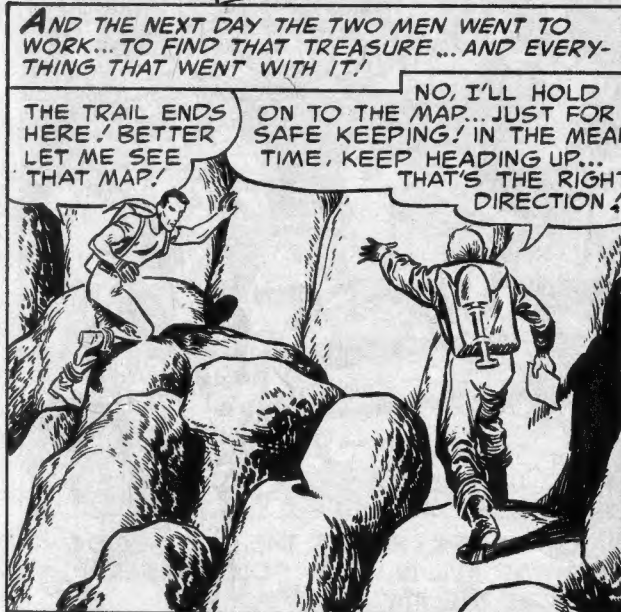
BUT THERE WERE OTHER LEGENDS ABOUT MEDUSA THAT PEOPLE WERE INTERESTED IN... ESPECIALLY THE ONE ABOUT HER TREASURE! AND BOB LUND AND PAUL SHIELDS WERE HUNTING FOR THAT TREASURE...

THE TWO MEN SOON LANDED IN ANCIENT GREECE. SOMEWHERE IN THOSE HILLS WAS WHAT THEY WERE SEEKING... THE TREASURE OF MEDUSA!

RIGHT THIS TIME, BOB! WE'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR THE TREASURE FOR YEARS... AND ALWAYS ENDED UP WITH NOTHING! HATE TO WASTE THIS MONEY FOR NOTHING!

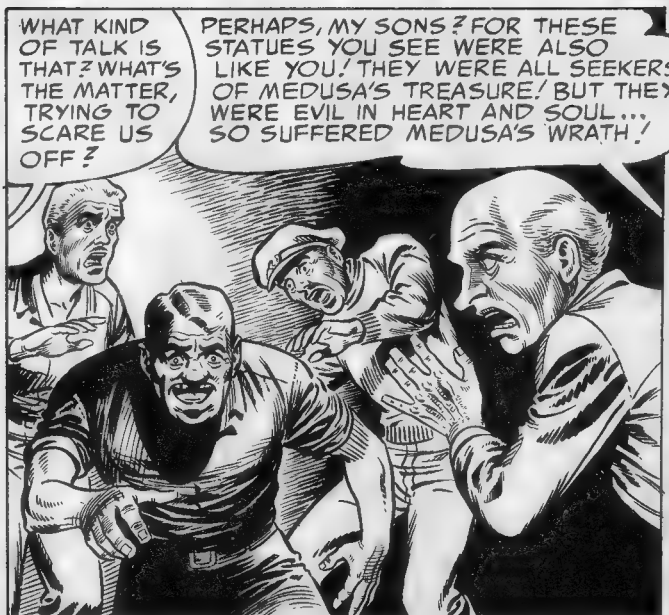
I KNOW I'M RIGHT! I FOUND THIS OLD MAP AMONG SOME HIDDEN PAPERS OF ANCIENT GREECE. EVERY INDICATION SHOWS WHERE MEDUSA HID HER TREASURE... AND WE'RE GOING TO FIND IT!





IT WAS A STRANGE SIGHT THAT GREETED THE ADVENTURERS WHEN THEY REACHED THE LEDGE! THERE, HIGH ON THE MOUNTAINS THEY FOUND A MANIACAL SCULPTOR SURROUNDED BY HIS WORKS!





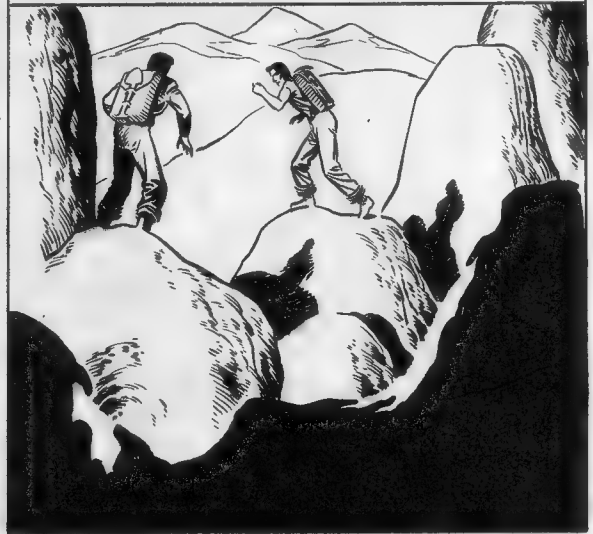
THE TWO MEN RETURNED TO THEIR LODGINGS FOR THE NIGHT. PAUL HAD FORGOTTEN THE WORDS OF THE OLD MAN, BUT NOT SO WITH BOB... THEY HUNG HEAVY OVER HIS TROUBLED MIND...



I'M WORRIED ABOUT WHAT THAT OLD MAN TOLD US, PAUL! I DO REMEMBER SOMETHING ABOUT THAT LEGEND! MAYBE HE'S RIGHT, MAYBE WE'D BETTER GIVE UP THIS SEARCH AND RETURN HOME!

ARE YOU CRAZY! AFTER WE'VE COME THIS FAR! I SAY THE OLD MAN'S AS CRAZY AS A LOON AND IS TRYING TO SCARE US OFF... BUT I'M NOT SCARING! TOMORROW WE'RE GOING BACK TO THAT LEDGE AND FIND THAT TREASURE!

AND SO THE NEXT MORNING FOUND THE TWO MEN HIGH AMONG THE GREEKIAN CRAGS... WITH THE SCENT OF THE LONG LOST TREASURE HOT IN THEIR MINDS...



THE SEARCH WENT ON FOR HOURS AND TURNED UP EXACTLY NOTHING... BUT SUDDENLY THERE AT THEIR FEET APPEARED THE FIRST CLUE...



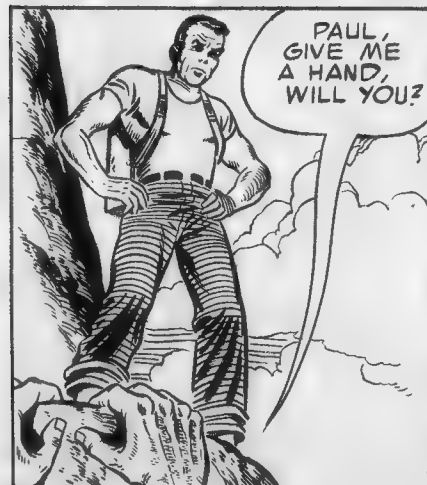
BOB, LOOK! THAT SYMBOL... ISN'T THAT WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR?

YOU'RE RIGHT! NOW I'M SURE WE'RE ON THE RIGHT TRACK... WE'RE CLOSER THAN I THOUGHT! IT'S IN SOME CAVE AMONG THOSE CRAGS!



NOW THAT WE'RE SO CLOSE, WHAT DO I NEED HIM FOR? WHY SHARE ALL THAT WEALTH WHEN I DON'T HAVE TO! A LITTLE ACCIDENT AND IT'S MINE... ALL MINE!

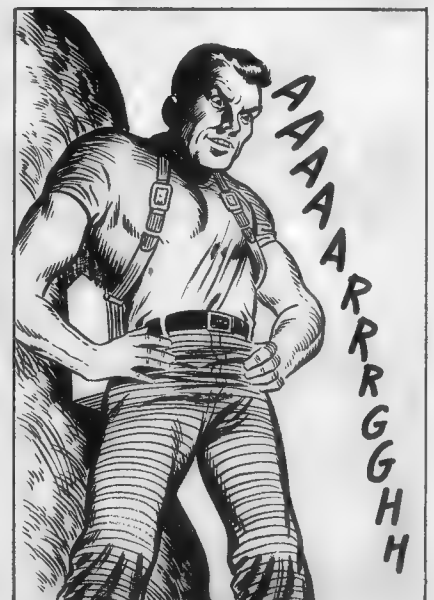
THE DECISION WAS MADE... NOW TO PUT IT INTO ACTION! PAUL BIDDING HIS TIME ON THE CLIMB UPWARD, BUT FINALLY THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED ITSELF!



PAUL, GIVE ME A HAND, WILL YOU?



I'LL GIVE YOU MORE THAN A HAND... I'LL GIVE YOU A FOOT!



AAAAARRGGHH

THE SCREAM SHATTERED THE STILL MOUNTAIN AIR, AND THEN SILENCE! AND FAR BELOW, THE BROKEN BODY OF BOB LAY QUIETLY IN THE SUNLIGHT...

NOW IT'S MINE...
ALL MINE!



IT WAS AN EAGER PAUL WHO QUICKLY PICKED UP THE TRAIL AND FOLLOWED IT UP THE CLIFFS...

SOON NOW...
I'M ON THE RIGHT
PATH... I FEEL IT...
I KNOW IT...



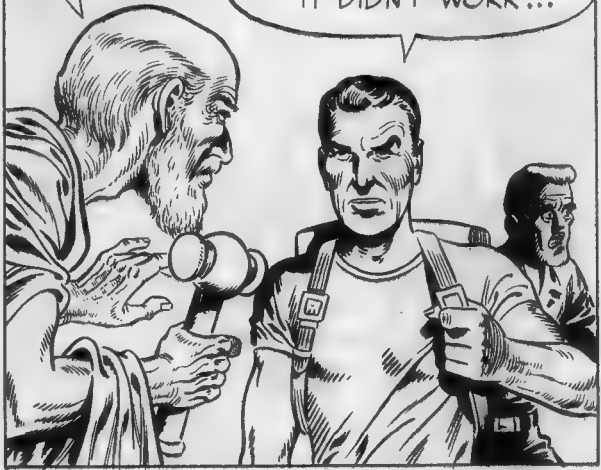
UP AND UP THE TRAIL LED...UNTIL...

WELL I'LL BE! RIGHT BACK TO THE OLD MAN... WONDER IF HE HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE TREASURE?



WH-WHAT ARE
YOU DOING HERE?
I THOUGHT YOU
HAD GIVEN UP
YOUR QUEST!

DON'T BE RIDICULOUS!
YOU DIDN'T THINK I
FELL FOR THAT STORY
DID YOU? I KNEW YOU
WERE JUST TRYING TO
SCARE US OFF... BUT
IT DIDN'T WORK...



BUT WHAT
ABOUT YOUR
FRIEND?
WHERE
IS HE?

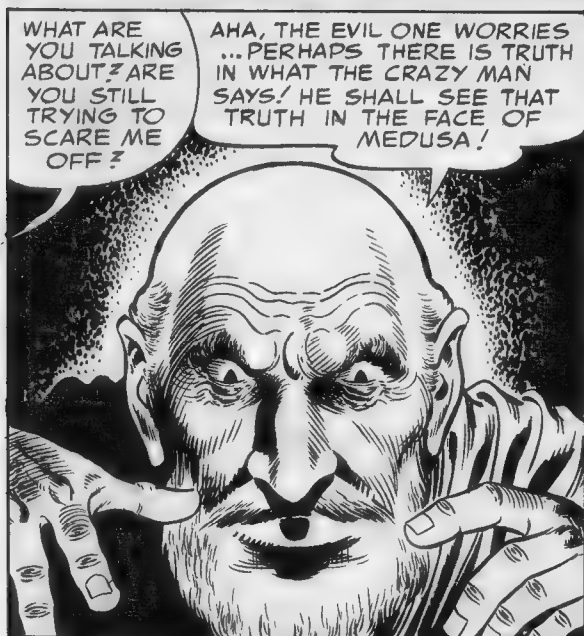
WELL, ER, YOU CONVINCED HIM!
HE'S GONE... DIDN'T WANT ANY-
THING TO DO WITH THE
TREASURE AFTER
LISTENING TO YOU!



NO HE DIDN'T!
YOU KILLED HIM!
YOU'RE EVIL! I
CAN SEE IT IN
YOUR EYES!

TAKE IT EASY, POP... NO
SENSE IN GETTING EXCITED
ABOUT IT! LET'S JUST...
SAY WE HAD AN
ACCIDENT!



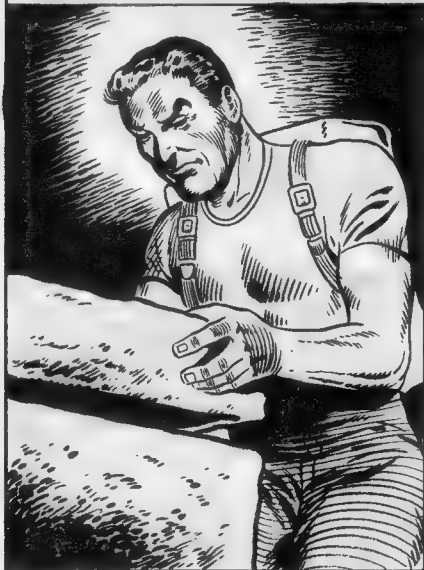


PAUL LEFT THE OLD MAN SOON AFTER THAT... BUT NOT FOR GOOD! HE WAITED IN THE DARKNESS UNTIL HE WAS ALONE AND THEN SILENTLY RETURNED TO THE LEDGE... A LEDGE IN WHOSE HIDDEN RECESSES LAY THE TREASURE OF THE AGES!

SILENTLY HE CREPT INTO THE STYGIAN DARKNESS... AND THEN HE SAW IT... THE SEARCH OF CENTURIES WAS ENDED!



SLOWLY HE RAISED THE ANCIENT LID, EYES FILLED WITH ANTICIPATION... ANTICIPATION THAT TURNED TO AMAZEMENT... THEN TO TERROR... THEN TO HORROR!



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, THE OLD MAN RETURNED ... AND FOUND EXACTLY WHAT HE EXPECTED!

YES, HE WAS HERE! THE FOOL! WELL, I MIGHT AS WELL BRING HIM OUT! HE SHALL TAKE HIS PLACE WITH THE OTHERS!



AND A SHORT TIME LATER!

YES, HE WAS NO DIFFERENT THAN THE OTHERS... EVIL IN HEART... AND EVIL IN SOUL!



I COULD TELL... JUST BY LOOKING INTO HIS EYES... THE EYES OF EVIL!



WHAT? YOU WANT TO SEE WHAT WAS IN THAT CHEST... YOU'D LIKE TO LOOK AT THE TREASURE OF MEDUSA? BETTER EXAMINE YOURSELF FIRST... ESPECIALLY YOUR HEART... AND YOUR SOUL!



The End

THROUGH THE CENTURIES WOMAN HAVE ADORED JEWELS...IT HAS BEEN THEIR IDOL...THEIR GOD! ESPECIALLY ONE STONE...IT HAS HYPNOTIZED THEM WITH ITS BEAUTY...IT'S DAZZLING COLOR HAS ENTRANCED THEM...

The Bloodstone!



THIS IS THE TALE OF A MAN WHO FELL UNDER THE SPELL OF THE **BLOOD-STONE**...HENRY WEBB! HENRY WAS A POOR JEWELER... STRUGGLING... BUT WITH A THIRST FOR MONEY...SOME-THING HE DREAMED ABOUT, BUT NEVER HAD!

HENRY HAD ANOTHER POSSESSION, HIS BEAUTIFUL WIFE CYNTHIA...CYNTHIA HAD NO DESIRE FOR WEALTH...ALL SHE WANTED WAS HENRY...WITH HIM SHE WAS HAPPY, AND THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERED!

LOOK AT ME...SLAVING AWAY IN A CHEAP JEWELRY STORE...AND FOR WHAT? FOR NICKELS AND DIMES, OH, TO BE WEALTHY...TO KNOW WHAT IT IS TO BE RICH!

BUT DARLING... I DON'T CARE ABOUT MONEY! ALL I CARE ABOUT IS YOU!

HENRY LOVED HIS WIFE... UNDERSTAND THAT! IT WAS JUST THAT SHE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND!

HOW CAN YOU TALK LIKE THAT! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS TO BE RICH! NOT TO HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING... TO DO WHAT YOU WANT... HAVE WHAT YOU WANT!

BUT I DO HAVE WHAT I WANT! YOU!



WHY COULDN'T SHE UNDERSTAND... WHY DIDN'T SHE UNDERSTAND!



I'D DO ANYTHING FOR WEALTH... ANYTHING...

IT WAS STRANGE, HENRY DIDN'T HEAR THE CREATURE ENTER... BUT SUDDENLY...

WHAT TH- WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?

NEVER MIND THAT NOW.. DID I HEAR YOU SAY YOU'D DO ANYTHING FOR WEALTH... WELL, MY FRIEND, I CAN GIVE YOU THAT WEALTH... BUT YOU MUST DO SOMETHING FOR ME! SELL A LITTLE GEM THAT I HAVE!



STOLEN PROPERTY, EH! NO, I WOULDN'T DO ANYTHING ILLEGAL!

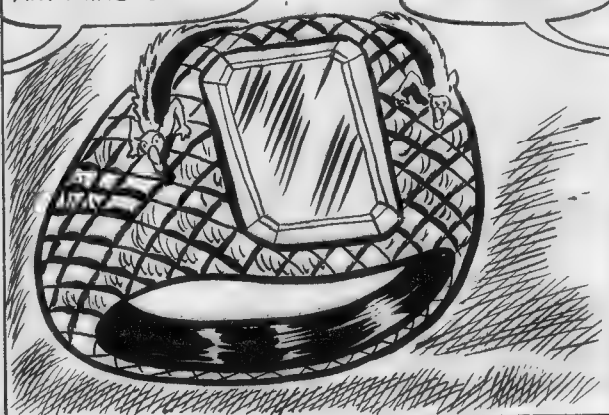
NO, THIS BELONGS TO ME! WHAT I WANT YOU TO DO IS TO SELL IT FOR ME... AND YOU KEEP THE MONEY! I'LL SEND YOU THE CUSTOMERS... FOR THEY SHALL RETURN IT TO ME!



HENRY DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE DEAL, IT DIDN'T MAKE SENSE! BUT WHAT DID HE HAVE TO LOSE... NOTHING!

WHY, I'D BE CRAZY NOT TO ACCEPT AN OFFER LIKE THAT! IS THAT THE STONE YOU WANT SOLD... WHY, IT'S A RUBY! BEAUTIFUL TOO! NEVER SAW ANYTHING LIKE IT!

RUBY... HMM, A BETTER NAME WOULD BE A BLOODSTONE! NOW REMEMBER... YOU KEEP THE MONEY... I'LL SEND YOU THE CUSTOMERS!



THE STRANGER VANISHED LEAVING THE RUBY WITH HENRY... IT WAS A STRANGE GLOWING SORT OF A GEM... HENRY WAS RIGHT, HE HAD NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT BEFORE!

WHY... IT'S WARM... PULSATING... IT'S AS IF IT WERE ALIVE!



THE DAYS PASSED AND HENRY FORGOT ABOUT THE STONE... FORGOT UNTIL ONE DAY!

I WAS TOLD YOU HAVE A CERTAIN RUBY RING FOR SALE! I MUST SEE IT!

RUBY RING? OH YES.. JUST ONE MOMENT PLEASE!



HENRY BROUGHT OUT THE RUBY... THE BLOODSTONE... WHAT DID HE HAVE TO LOSE!

YES, THIS IS THE ONE! I'LL TAKE IT! THIS SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO COVER IT!

HUH! OH YES, THAT SHOULD BE AMPLE! I'M SURE YOU'LL BE VERY PLEASED WITH THE GEM!



THE GIRL TOOK THE RING AND LEFT...SHE WORE IT THAT NIGHT...FOR A RING LIKE THAT WAS MEANT TO BE WORN! AND WHEN SHE WENT TO SLEEP, THE RUBY WAS STILL ON HER FINGER...STILL WARM...PULSATING!



THE HOURS PASSED AND THE RING GLOWED BRIGHTER... EVER BRIGHTER...AND THEN FROM OUT OF THE DARKNESS!

SLEEP MY BEAUTY...ETERNAL SLEEP! BUT YOU WON'T NEED THIS ANY MORE! HA! HA! HA!



THEY FOUND THE GIRL THE NEXT MORNING... LIFELESS... AND STRANGELY...

BLOODLESS! THE BLOOD HAS BEEN DRAINED FROM HER BODY!

OH NO... WHO COULD HAVE DONE THIS... WHAT COULD HAVE DONE THIS!



HENRY ALSO RECEIVED A VISITOR THAT MORNING...ONE HE WELCOMED...HE DIDN'T ASK ANY QUESTIONS...ALL HE WAS INTERESTED IN WAS THE RUBY...THE BLOOD-STONE!

YOU HAVE IT! REMEMBER OUR DEAL?

YES, MY GREEDY FRIEND, I HAVE IT! AND I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN OUR DEAL! THE MONEY IS YOURS...THE CUSTOMERS MINE...EH...EH...EH...



THE MONTHS PASSED, AND THE CUSTOMERS APPEARED, AND THAT WAS THE LAST HENRY SAW OF THEM...BUT THE STRANGE FATE BEFELL THEM ALL...THE BEAUTIFUL RING...DEATH...BLOODLESS CORPSES... AND THE APPEARANCE OF THE STRANGE CREATURE HOVERING IN THE BACKGROUND!



AND AS THE TIME PASSED HENRY'S WEALTH INCREASED... NOW HE HAD ACHIEVED HIS DESIRE... HIS AMBITION WAS FULL FILLED... HE WAS RICH!



WHO CAN SAY WHAT FATE WILL ACCOMPLISH... FOR A FEW DAYS LATER...

HOW DID THAT FUNNY LITTLE MAN KNOW I NEEDED A NEW RING! AND WHY DID HE SEND ME TO HENRY'S STORE? WHY... THIS IS JUST THE THING I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR... HENRY WON'T MISS IT... I'LL ONLY WEAR IT TONIGHT... THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH!



YES CYNTHIA, ONE NIGHT WOULD BE ENOUGH! MORE THAN ENOUGH! FOR THE CUSTOMER IS ALWAYS RIGHT...

LIKE ALL THE REST... HEH... HEH... HEH... SLEEP, MY PRETTY... SLEEP AND DREAM... FOR YOURS IS THE SLEEP OF DEATH!



HENRY DISCOVERED HIS WIFE'S BODY... DRAINED...

SHE... SHE'S LIKE ALL THE OTHERS I READ ABOUT! BLOODLESS! IT'S THE RING... IT HAS TO BE THE RUBY! BLOODSTONE... NOW I KNOW!



YES, HENRY FINALLY UNDERSTOOD... AND THE CREATURE REALIZED IT...

HENRY KNEW, AND THERE WAS NO SHOCK WHEN HE LOOKED UP AT THE CREATURE... THE CREATURE FROM THE GRAVE... THE VAMPIRE!

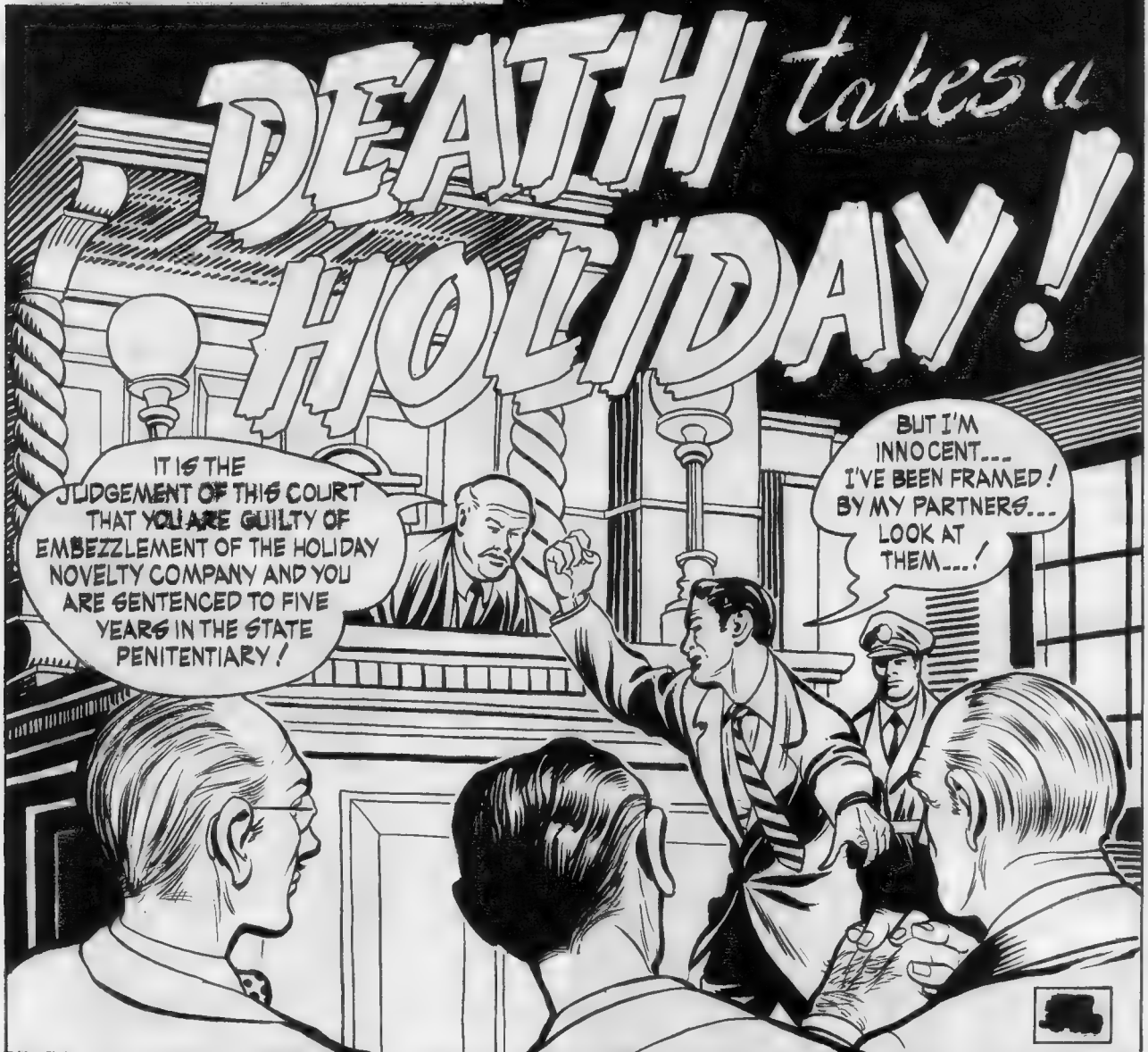
GO AWAY... GO AWAY! HAVEN'T YOU HAD ENOUGH? I SEE YOU HAVE THE SECRET OF THE RUBY... WHY IT'S CALLED A BLOODSTONE! FOR TO HAVE ITS COLOR IT MUST HAVE BLOOD! VITAL BLOOD! AND SO MUST I... THE TWO OF US ARE ALIKE!



BUT WE BOTH GROW HUNGRY, HENRY! I WILL SEND YOU ANOTHER CUSTOMER... AND WE SHALL DRINK OUR FILL... YOU OF MONEY AND I OF THE BLOODSTONE! HEH... HEH... HEH!



GEORGE LLOYD STOOD BEFORE THE JUDGE AND HEARD THE SENTENCE PRONOUNCED...
GUILTY! BUT HE CLAIMED IT WAS A FRAME AND HE SORE VENGEANCE ON HIS
EX-PARTNERS...VENGEANCE WHEREIN...



LOOK AT THEM...SAM ARROW...AL JORDAN...EDDIE GANZ...THEY ARE THE GUILTY ONES! THEY'VE ALWAYS TRIED TO FORCE ME OUT OF THE BUSINESS AND NOW THEY'VE DONE IT! BUT I'LL BE BACK...AND WITH VENGEANCE...THEY SHALL DIE BY THE VERY THING THAT MAKES THEM SUCCESSFUL...**HOLIDAYS.**



AND SO THEY PUT YOU AWAY, GEORGE, FOR FIVE YEARS...THEY THOUGHT!



ANOTHER FEW DAYS AND I'LL BE FREE... FREE TO START MY CRUSADE OF **VENGEANCE!**

AND YOUR PLAN WORKED... YOU ESCAPED!



WANT A LIFT, DOC?

THANKS, MY CAR BROKE DOWN A WAY BACK AND I'M TRYING TO GET TO THE CITY... IT'S AN EMERGENCY CALL!

OTHERS HEARD ABOUT YOUR ESCAPE...ESPECIALLY THE ONES YOU HOPED WOULD HEAR ABOUT IT!



SO HE'S ESCAPED. SO WHAT? THE COPS WILL GET HIM BEFORE HE GETS TO THE CITY!

I DON'T THINK SO.. GEORGE IS A PRETTY SMART GUY. HE KNOWS WE FRAMED HIM... WHICH IS MORE THAN THE COURTS COULD FIGURE OUT!

YEAH, AND HE SWORE VENGEANCE ON THE THREE OF US...I'M WORRIED!

AND LOOK AT THE DATE...ST. VALENTINE'S DAY!

SO WHAT... DO YOU THINK HE'S GONNA TURN INTO CLIPID!



AND THAT NIGHT...



I DON'T LIKE IT... TOO QUIET OUT THERE!



BUT IT'S TOO NICE A NIGHT TO SPEND INSIDE.. MIGHT AS WELL GET SOME AIR!



ST. VALENTINE'S DAY, EDDIE. REMEMBER? AND THIS WAS REALLY AN **ACT OF LOVE!**

AND THE NEXT DAY...

BUT HE KILLED EDDIE JUST THE WAY HE SAID HE WOULD! AND WE'RE NEXT!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT LUNATIC...THE COPS'LL GET HIM FOR SURE THIS TIME AND IT'LL BE FOR... **MURDER!**



A WEEK LATER...

THEY HAVEN'T CAUGHT HIM YET, SAM...AND I KNOW HE'S BEEN WATCHING ME!

IT'S JUST NERVES, AL...YOU'LL GET OVER IT. THE POLICE CALLED ME THIS MORNING AND SAID THEY HAD SOME CLUES AS TO WHERE THEY COULD FIND HIM. YOU'LL SEE, THEY'LL HAVE HIM IN A FEW DAYS!



YEAH, BUT LOOK AT THE DATE...IT'S **WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY!**

AAH, YOU DON'T REALLY BELIEVE HE'D TRY ANYTHING AFTER MURDERING EDDIE... WHY, HE'D HAVE EVERY COP IN THE STATE AFTER HIM THEN!

HOLIDAY NOVELTY CO.

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		1	2	3	4	5							
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	27	28											



LATER IN THE DAY...

I GUESS SAM WAS RIGHT... HE WON'T TRY ANYTHING TODAY!



NO...NO...

NO...NO!



I CANNOT TELL A LIE, ---- BUT YOU DID... AND NOW YOU PAID FOR IT!



SEVERAL MONTHS LATER...

I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M SO WORRIED... BUT I GOT A FEELING THAT SOMEBODY'S BEEN FOLLOWING ME! AHH, JUST A CASE OF NERVES.



SURE, WHAT HAVE I GOT TO WORRY ABOUT, NOW I OWN... AARRGH



TODAY IS THE 4TH OF JULY, SAM... **INDEPENDENCE DAY**... AND TODAY THE WORLD IS FREE OF THE LAST OF MY EX-PARTNERS!



THE MONTHS PASSED AND GEORGE FORGOT ABOUT HIS CRIMES. BUT THE POLICE DIDN'T... AND ONE DAY THEY CLOSED IN ON HIM!

GRAB HIM! STOP THAT MAN!

IF I CAN ONLY GET THROUGH THIS CROWD TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET... THEY'LL NEVER CATCH ME THEN!

RITZ



I'M CUT OFF... THEY'RE ALL OVER.



WHERE'LL I GO... WHAT CAN I DO!



WELL, AT LEAST IT'LL SAVE THE STATE THE COST OF ELECTROCUTING HIM!

FUNNY THING, PAT, BUT DO YOU KNOW WHAT TODAY IS? **ARMISTICE DAY!**



THE END

THE OTHER WORLD

WOW, LOOK AT THAT ONE FROM SATURN... SURE HATE TO RUN INTO THAT IN A DARK ALLEY!

C'MON, WE'VE BEEN IN THE **SPACE MUSEUM** TOO LONG AS IT IS. WE'VE GOT TO SEE CAPT. LAND OF THE **OUTER GUARD PATROL**... HE'S GOT AN ASSIGNMENT FOR US.



THE YEAR; 2252! MAN HAD ADVANCED BEYOND HIS WILDEST DREAMS! THE STARS WERE HIS HORIZONS, THE UNIVERSE HIS GOAL! EVEN THE OTHER PLANETS HAD FALLEN TO MAN... BECAUSE MAN WAS... **CIVILIZED!**

AHH, LOWERY AND WARREN, I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU. I THINK YOU'RE GOING TO LIKE THIS ASSIGNMENT. **LIFE HAS BEEN DISCOVERED ON PLANET 2-A IN THE FIFTH GALAXY!** I WANT YOU TWO TO GO THERE AND HAVE A LOOK AROUND... SEE IF THEY'RE FRIENDLY!

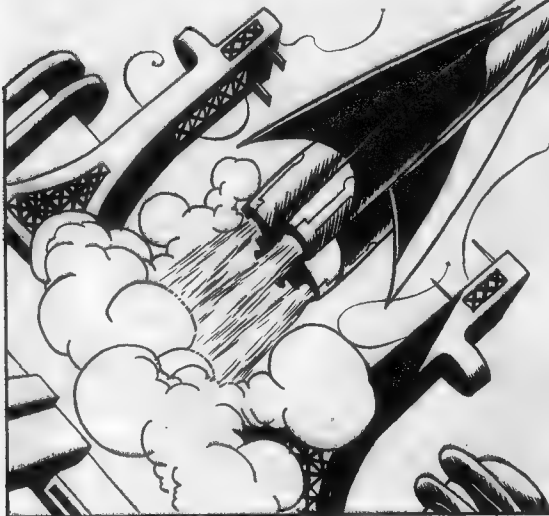
VERY GOOD, SIR... WHEN DO YOU WANT US TO LEAVE?



AT ONCE! YOU'LL FIND A CRAFT READY AT THE OUTER-SPACE-PORT! AND IF POSSIBLE, WE WANT YOU TO BRING BACK A SPECIMEN OF THE INHABITANTS... THE **HIGHER COUNCIL** WOULD LIKE TO INVESTIGATE THE TYPE OF LIFE WE'LL BE DEALING WITH!



A FEW HOURS LATER THE EXPEDITION WAS READY TO **BLAST OFF!**



IMAGINE, LIFE OUT THERE IN THE **FIFTH GALAXY!** WONDER WHAT WE'LL FIND!

STOP WONDERING, YOU'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH... WE'RE ALMOST THERE!



A SHORT TIME LATER THE SPACE SHIP LANDED. THE TWO MEN WERE READY TO EXPLORE THE UNKNOWN PLANET!..



FULL POWER ON THOSE RETARDO-JETS, TED!

WATCH THAT GYRO, SHE'S LEVELING OFF!

GUESS THEY KNEW WHAT THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT WHEN THEY SAID THIS PLACE HAD LIFE ON IT! **LOOK!**

KEEP THAT GUN READY... I DON'T THINK IT'S SPOTTED US YET!



KEEP FIRING! THAT THING ISN'T DOWN YET!

NEVER SAW ANYTHING LIKE IT! IT'S TOUGHER THAN THOSE **TIGRO-TANKS OF PLUTO!**



LOOK AT THE SIZE OF IT! THERE ISN'T ANYTHING IN OUR GALAXY THAT CAN COMPARE WITH IT!

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, THERE MIGHT BE SOME OTHERS HANGING AROUND! BESIDES, WE'RE HERE TO SEE IF THERE IS ANY **CIVILIZED LIFE** ON THE PLANET!





I DON'T LIKE IT, PHIL. I'VE GOT A FEELING THAT SOMETHING OR SOMEONE IS WATCHING US!

ME TOO. LET'S PULL UP BEHIND THOSE BOULDERS AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS!



SHHH, SOMETHING'S COMING!

SHOOT FIRST, WE'LL ASK QUESTIONS LATER!



MORE OF THOSE MONSTERS!

AND THEY'RE AFTER US!



BLAST THEM! KEEP FIRING!

MEANWHILE ON ANOTHER PART OF THE PLANET OTHER EYES WERE WATCHING THE TWO EARTH-MEN...

LOOK AT THAT! **THEY'RE KILLERS!** SHALL I GIVE THE ORDERS TO HAVE THEM DESTROYED!

NO, THESE ARE TWO NEW SPECIES ... LET'S SEE WHAT THEY DO NOW!



SEE WHAT THEY ARE... **BARBARIANS!** I SAY **KILL THEM!**

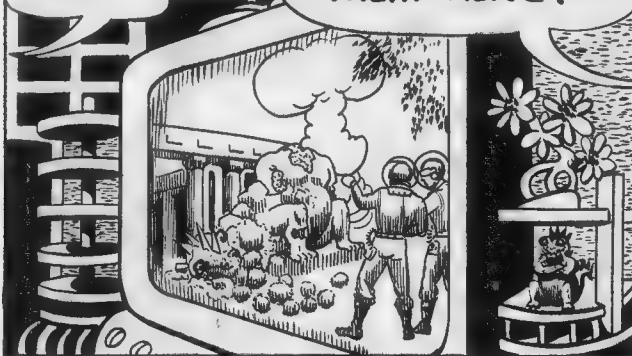
MAYBE YOU ARE RIGHT, XNZYL. IT IS TOO BAD THAT ALL LIVING THINGS ARE NOT AS PEACEFUL AND AS **CIVILIZED** AS WE! BUT I MUST SEE THEM CLOSE UP... **TAKE THEM ALIVE!**



MEANWHILE, THE EYES OF THE TELO-SCREEN CONTINUED TO KEEP ITS WATCH ON THE TWO SPACE MEN...

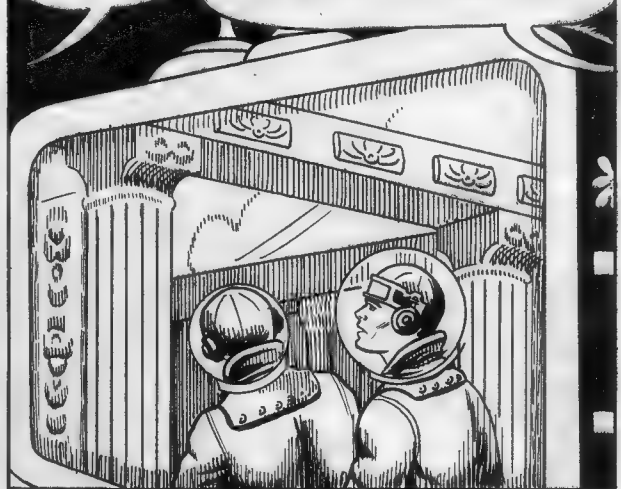
THEY'VE DESTROYED THE **TEMPLE OF LODI!** THE BARBARIANS! I SAY **KILL THEM** BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

PERHAPS YOU ARE RIGHT... I CAN SEE THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE THE SAME TYPE OF CIVILIZATION AS WE DO! **IT IS BEST THAT YOU TAKE THEM ALIVE!**



WHY ALIVE? WHY NOT DO AWAY WITH THEM?

I AM SURE OUR SCIENTISTS WILL WANT TO EXAMINE THEM FIRST... THEY CAN ALWAYS FIND SOMETHING INTERESTING IN THESE ALIEN SPECIMENS!



THIS PLACE COULD HAVE ONLY BEEN BUILT BY A CIVILIZED PEOPLE. LOOK AT THOSE CARVINGS! NEVER SAW ANYTHING ON EARTH TO COMPARE WITH THEM!

BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM... THERE'S NOT A SIGN OF LIFE AROUND HERE!



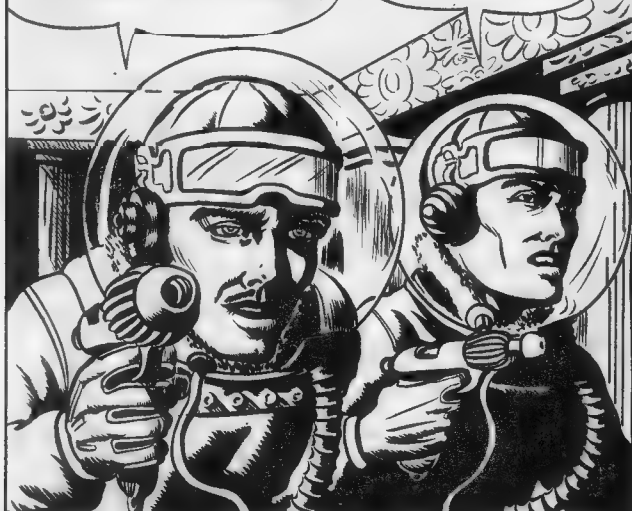
THERE'S YOUR ANSWER... THOSE MONSTERS! THEY MUST HAVE OVER-RUN THE ENTIRE PLANET!

BETTER BLAST IT... IT'S GETTING A LITTLE TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT!



LET IT GET A LITTLE CLOSER, PHIL... NO SENSE IN TAKING ANY CHANCES ON MISSING!

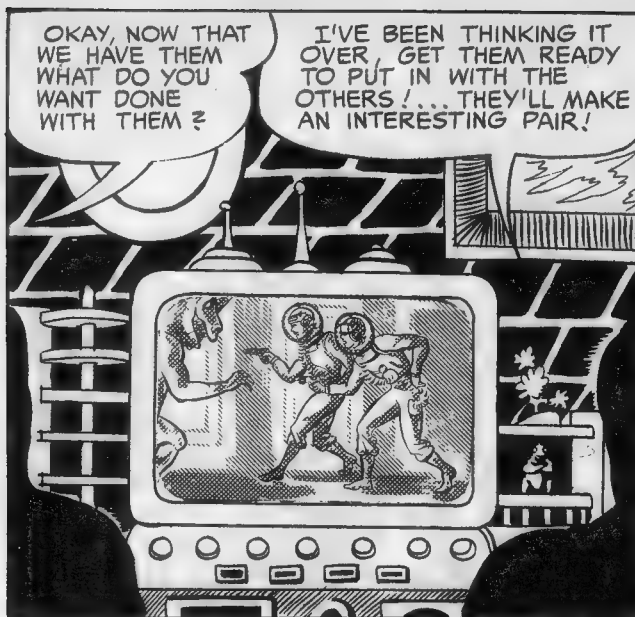
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT... OKAY, HERE GOES!...



I CAN'T SHOOT... I'M, I'M PETRIFIED!— PARALYZED ???

ME, ME, ME TOO!





HEH--HEH--READY FOR TODAY'S LESSON, FRIENDS? THIS IS THE **GHOUL TEACHER**--
YOUR INSTRUCTOR IN **GORE**--NOW TO THE SUBJECT AT HAND -- A TALE TOO
HOT TO HANDLE -- I CALL IT ---

CREMATION



SINCE YOU HAVE JUST WITNESSED MY ENDING, LET'S BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING! I WAS HAPPY IN THOSE DAYS --- SEATED AT THE PLACE OF HONOR IN THE HOME OF PROF. JORGENS! FOR EVEN THOUGH I WAS EMPTY, I KNEW THAT SOMEDAY THE DUST OF THE GOOD SCIENTIST WOULD SETTLE WITHIN MY PORCELAIN FRAME!

EMPTY NOW - BUT NOT FOREVER! ONE OF THESE DAYS --- POOF -- AND WE SHALL BE TOGETHER THROUGH ETERNITY!



"THIS IS DUROC, THE PROFESSOR'S FAITHFUL SERVANT! THE GOOD SCIENTIST HAD FOUND HIM MORE DEAD THAN ALIVE, AND NURSED HIM BACK TO HEALTH! DUROC WOULD GLADLY GIVE WHAT WAS LEFT OF THAT LIFE AT JORGENS' SAY SO - HIS WISH WAS THE DWARF'S COMMAND!"

BE CAREFUL, DUROC - I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO BREAK THAT URN!

YES, MASTER - AND I KNOW THE REASON!



PROFESSOR JORGENS' HAD ONE IDIOSYNCRASY-- HIS LOVE FOR GOLD -- EVERY BIT OF HIS WEALTH HAD BEEN MELTED DOWN AND CONVERTED INTO GLEAMING BARS OF THE PRECIOUS METAL - AND A SMALL FORTUNE RESTED WITHIN HIS SAFE --

BEAUTIFUL - THE COLOR - THE WEIGHT -- THE PERFECT METAL!



YES, IT WAS A HAPPY HOUSEHOLD - AND I WAS CONTENT TO BIDE MY TIME UNTIL I WOULD FOREVER HOLD MY MASTER WITHIN MY BREAST -- BUT THEN ONE DAY A DARK AND FOREBODING CLOUD APPEARED WITHIN OUR HOME!

YOUR NEPHEW, MASTER! HE HAS RETURNED!

I HAVE BEEN EXPECTING HIM -- THE VULTURES ALWAYS RETURN WHEN THEY SMELL THE NEARNESS OF DEATH!



I DIDN'T SEE WHAT WENT ON -- BUT I COULD VISUALIZE -- FOR IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN ANY DIFFERENT THAN BEFORE --

WELL, SILAS, I SEE YOU'VE RETURNED! I THOUGHT I ORDERED YOU OUT OF MY HOUSE!

BUT SURELY YOU WANT YOUR ONLY LIVING RELATIVE BY YOUR SIDE DURING YOUR LAST DAYS -- YOU'RE NOT GETTING ANY YOUNGER, UNCLE!



AT THE TIME I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE GOOD SCIENTIST HAD ON HIS MIND -- I ONLY KNEW THAT HE DIDN'T ORDER HIS NEPHEW OUT OF THE HOUSE AS HE USUALLY DID --

YES, SILAS, I BELIEVE YOU'RE RIGHT - IT IS A COMFORT TO HAVE ONE'S FLESH AND BLOOD WITH THEM AS THE DAYS GROW SHORTER - YOU CAN STAY!

THERE! I KNEW YOU'D SEE THINGS MY WAY!





HAD MY MASTER GONE CRAZY -- WHAT WAS GOING ON ANYWAY? AND AS THE TIME

PASSED, THE SITUATION BECAME EVEN MORE PERPLEXING! FOR THE PROFESSOR KNOWING THAT SILAS' ONLY REASON FOR STAYING WAS THE GOLD, INSISTED ON SHOWING THEM TO HIS GREEDY NEPHEW! THE DESIRE WAS WRITTEN OVER HIS FACE -- HOW TO GET HIS HANDS ON THAT WEALTH!

THE TIME PASSED AND THE GAME OF CAT AND MOUSE CONTINUED - NOW JORGENS WOULD WAIT UNTIL HE HEARD SILAS COME INTO THE ROOM, AND THEN WOULD OPEN THE SAFE TO SHOW HIM THE WEALTH - SLOWLY HE WAS DRIVING HIM TO -- TO --



-- MURDER! THE GREED COULD NO LONGER BE CONTAINED WITHIN THE EVIL MIND --

GOT TO GET THAT GOLD - HOW? HOW? HELP HIM TO HIS DEATH! SURE, HE'S AN OLD MAN, NOBODY WOULD SUSPECT IF HE DIED A LITTLE SOONER!



AND SO THE PLAN WAS HATCHED - A PLAN I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND - COULDN'T UNDERSTAND -- BUT COULD ONLY WATCH IN ITS OPERATION!

HE NEVER MISSES THIS CUP OF CHOCOLATE BEFORE RETIRING - NOW FOR THE FIRST DOSE AND A LITTLE MORE EACH NIGHT - UNTIL ONE DAY - HEH - HEH!

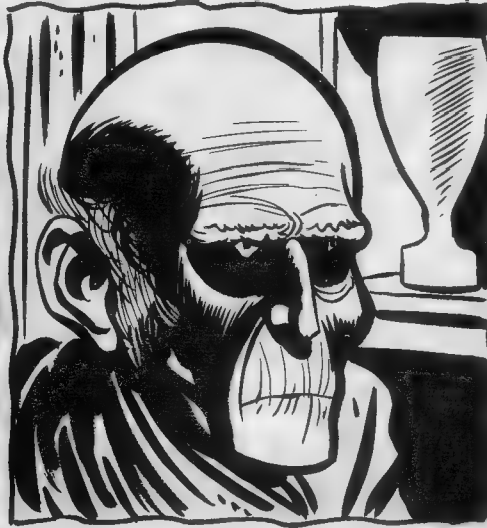


IF I COULD ONLY WARN HIM -- SAY SOMETHING -- BUT IT SEEMED AS IF HE KNEW - WANTED IT TO HAPPEN --

AH, YES, THE CUP OF CHOCOLATE THAT MY GOOD NEPHEW PREPARED - I MUSTN'T DISAPPOINT HIM!



THE TIME PASSED AND THE DRUG TOOK EFFECT - ONE COULD HARDLY RECOGNIZE MY MASTER -- HE HAD WASTED AWAY TO SUCH AN EXTREME - BUT RATHER THAN REVOLT AGAINST THE SITUATION HE SEEMED TO TAKE DELIGHT IN IT -- AS IF IT WERE HIS PLOT THAT WAS SUCCEEDING RATHER THAN HIS NEPHEW'S --



I COULD ONLY SURMISE WHAT HAPPENED--FOR I RECALL THE NIGHT THEY REMOVED THE GOLD FROM THE SAFE AND WENT DOWN TO THE LABORATORY--

TURN UP THE HEAT, DUROC-- AND EVERY BAR MUST GO--

YES, MASTER--



THEN HE ADDED THE FINISHING TOUCH--THE MOLTEN GOLD BUBBLED AND SEETHED AS HE DROPPED THE SMALL VIAL INTO THE SOLUTION-- AND THE GRIN ON HIS FACE TOLD OF MANY THINGS--OF SUCCESS--OF DEATH--OF MURDER!



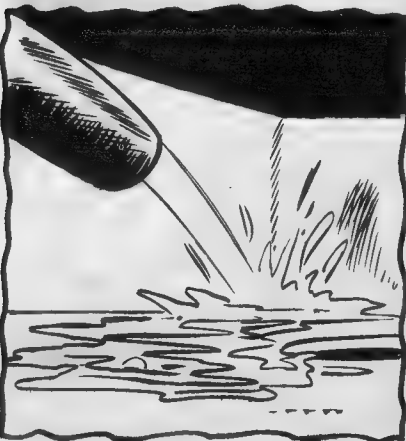
WITH THE PREPARATIONS COMPLETED, THE WILL TO LIVE VANISHED--AND A FEW DAYS LATER THE GOOD PROFESSOR WAS DEAD! DUROC DRIED A USELESS TEAR AND THEN SLOWLY DRAGGED THE BODY TO THE LABORATORY BELOW--



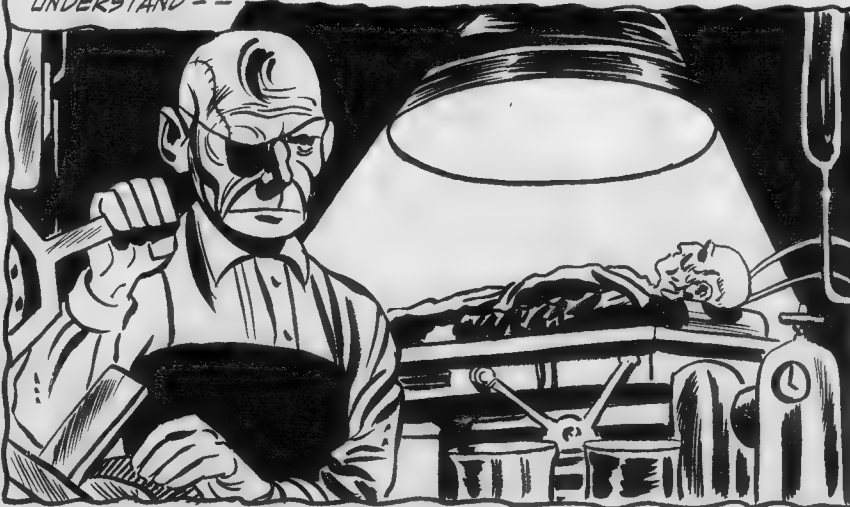
TENDERLY HE LIFTED THE BODY ONTO A TABLE--- GENTLY HE SCRAPED AT THE DEAD MAN'S NECK AND THEN FITTED A SYRINGE INTO THE CAVITY-- HE PULLED A SWITCH AND A LOW HUM FILTERED THROUGH THE ROOM. --



THE SCARLET FLUID STAINED THE SINK AS IT PULSED OUT OF THE TUBE-- AND A MAN'S BLOOD DISAPPEARED DOWN A DRAIN-- BUT DUROC WASN'T THROUGH-- THERE WAS STILL WORK TO BE DONE--



THEN HE REVERSED THE PROCESS--AND FROM SOMEWHERE IN THE DARKNESS A FLUID WAS PUMPED BACK INTO HIS MASTER'S VEINS-- HE WAS EMBALMING THE PROFESSOR-- BUT WHY? WHY? HE KNEW THAT SOON HE WOULD BE CREMATED-- I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND--



SILAS AGREED TO THE CREMATION-- WASN'T THAT HIS UNCLE'S LAST WISH? AND IT WAS WITH FASCINATION THAT THE NEPHEW AND THE DEVOTED DWARF WATCHED THE FLAMES SWEEP OVER THE BODY OF WHAT WAS ONCE A HUMAN BEING --

THE TONGUES OF FLAMES LICKED AT THE CARCASS-- AND THE STENCH OF BURNING FLESH PERMEATED THE ROOM - A STENCH THAT STUNG THE NOSTRILS AND NAUSEATED THE MOURNERS -- ASHES TO ASHES -- DUST TO DUST --



THEY WAITED FOR THE HEAT AND FLAMES TO DIMINISH - AND THEN DUROC-- EVER FAITHFUL DUROC SWEEP THE ASHES INTO A SMALL RECEPTACLE -- AND I WAITED EAGERLY -- FOR I KNEW THAT I SOON WOULD RECEIVE THEM --

AND THEN I TOOK HIM TO MY BREAST-- NARMED HIM -- CUDDLED HIM - BUT APPARENTLY THIS WASN'T TO BE THE END --

HERE, MR. SILAS-- YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE TO DO NOW!

YES - IT WAS MY UNCLE'S LAST REQUEST--



THE GLOATING FACE OF SILAS STARED DOWN AS HE POURED THE ASHES THROUGH HIS FINGERS-- AND IT WAS THEN THAT I FELT THE BURNING- TINGLING SENSATION -- IT WAS THEN THAT I KNEW -- AND I LAUGHED TO MYSELF --

PERHAPS HE KNEW THEN, TOO, PERHAPS HE HAD FELT THE SAME TINGLING, THE SAME BURNING- SENSATION AS I HAD -- BUT HE PUSHED IT OUT OF HIS MIND AS HE REMEMBERED THE UNTOLD WEALTH THAT LAY WAITING FOR HIM --

NOW IT'S MINE, DEAR UNCLE - YOUR GOLD IS MINE!

HEH-HEH -- ALL THESE YEARS -- NOW I'VE GOT IT-- I'M RICH! RICH! RICH!



THE WIND HOWLED LIKE A BANSHEE - AS HE EMPTIED THE ASHES INTO THE DARKNESS BELOW - HE HAD GOTTEN RID OF THE EVIDENCE - HE HAD DESTROYED THE ONLY LINK LEFT WITH THE CRIME -- HE HAD, WELL, THAT WAS FOR HIM TO DISCOVER --



QUICKLY HE HURRIED TO THE SAFE - TO THE WEALTH - TO THE GOLD - BUT FOUND ONLY A LETTER!

THE GOLD - IT'S GONE - THE LETTER -- HE MUST'VE HIDDEN IT SOMEWHERE - SURE, THAT'S IT!



NOW I UNDERSTOOD - JUST AS SILAS DID -- FOR THE EMBALMING FLUID HAD BEEN THE MOLTEN GOLD - AND HE HAD THROWN IT AWAY -- A FORTUNE WAS GONE WITH THE WIND -- BUT READ ON -- READ ON --

NO! -- NO!



HE READ ON - AND THEN IN HIS ANGER, HE DESTROYED ME - FOR HE HAD ALSO DESTROYED HIMSELF - HIS UNCLE HAD SEEN TO THAT - AND I GRINNED WHEN I SAW WHAT WAS LEFT OF WHAT WAS ONCE A HUMAN BEING --



FOR THE BLUBBLING -- SEETHING SOLUTION HAD BEEN CAUSED BY RADIO-ACTIVE MATERIAL THAT HE HAD DROPPED INTO THE GOLD - RADIO-ACTIVITY THAT HAD CAUGHT SILAS IN ITS HORRIBLE, BURNING, SEARING DEATH DEALING, EMBRACE!

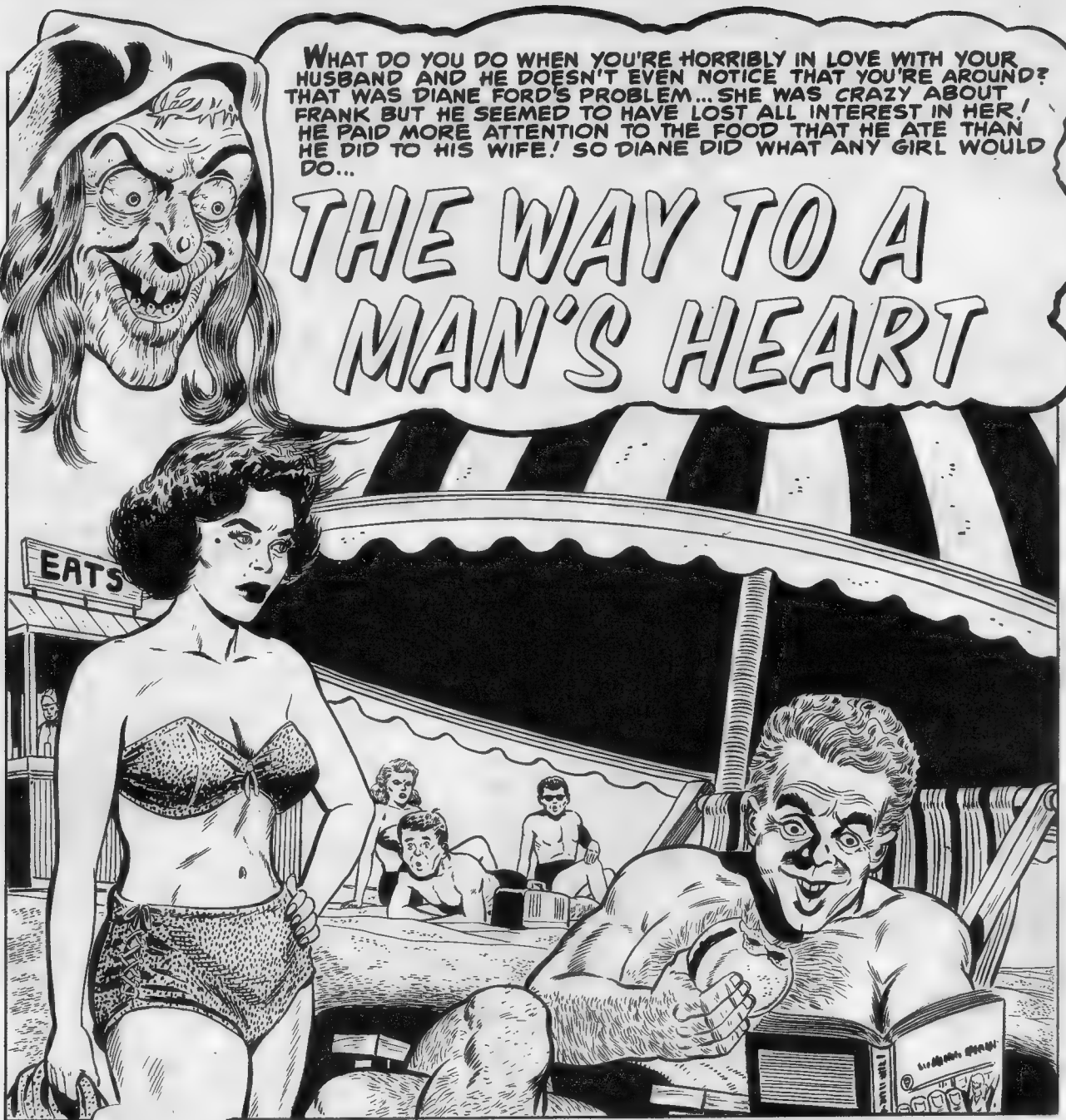


WELL, POOR SILAS REALLY MADE HIS UNCLE BURN, DIDN'T HE? AND WHERE THERE'S SMOKE, THERE'S A FIRE! TOO BAD THE FUEL, I MEAN THE FOOL, TURNED OUT TO BE SILAS! BUT THEN, THERE'S NO FUEL LIKE AN OLD FUEL! HEH -- HEH!



WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU'RE HORRIBLY IN LOVE WITH YOUR HUSBAND AND HE DOESN'T EVEN NOTICE THAT YOU'RE AROUND? THAT WAS DIANE FORD'S PROBLEM... SHE WAS CRAZY ABOUT FRANK BUT HE SEEMED TO HAVE LOST ALL INTEREST IN HER! HE PAID MORE ATTENTION TO THE FOOD THAT HE ATE THAN HE DID TO HIS WIFE! SO DIANE DID WHAT ANY GIRL WOULD DO...

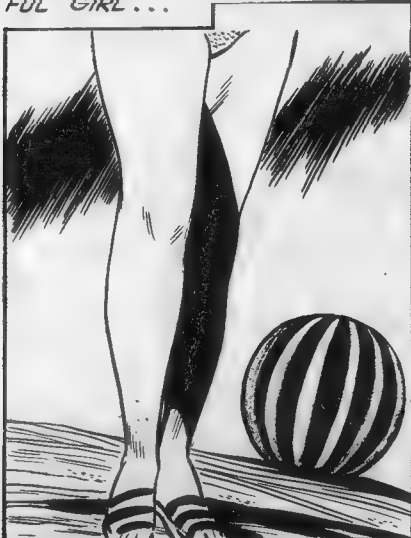
THE WAY TO A MAN'S HEART

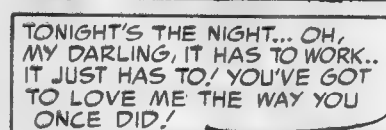
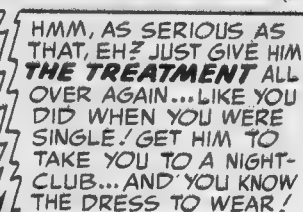
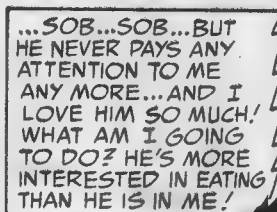
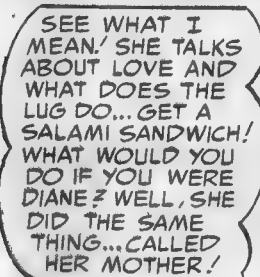


DIANE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT. AFTER ALL, SHE WAS A BEAUTIFUL GIRL...

...WITH PLENTY TO OFFER...

...WHAT WAS THE MATTER WITH FRANK? DIANE WASN'T JUST ANOTHER GIRL... WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO HIS LOVE?







FRANK! THAT MAN... HE'S...HE'S MAKING A PASS AT ME!

WHA...WHAT'S THE MATTER! CAN'T YOU SEE I'M BUSY...JUST FORGET ABOUT HIM AND EAT YOUR DINNER! IT'S DELICIOUS!



NOW I KNOW YOU DON'T LOVE ME ANY MORE! WHEN WE WERE FIRST MARRIED YOU WOULD HAVE BEATEN THAT MAN TO A PULP...NOW...NOW YOU JUST GO RIGHT ON EATING! FRANK, TAKE ME HOME!

BUT...BUT...OH, ALL RIGHT... JUST LET ME FINISH THIS DESSERT! IT'S OUT OF THIS WORLD!

NO, MAMA'S ADVICE DIDN'T WORK, DID IT? WELL, BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME! THERE MUST BE A WAY TO BRING BACK FRANK'S LOVE... THERE HAD TO BE!

...AND THE OPPORTUNITY FOR FRANK TO PROVE HIS LOVE CAME VERY QUICKLY! FOR A FEW DAYS LATER WAS THEIR ANNIVERSARY...



...WONDER WHAT'S KEEPING HIM SO LATE? IT'S OUR ANNIVERSARY! I KNOW, I BET HE'S GOT SOME KIND OF A SURPRISE FOR ME! SURE, THAT'S IT! THAT MUST BE HIM NOW!

YOU FORGOT IT WAS OUR ANNIVERSARY! OH NO! AND YOU CAN'T COME HOME... YOU HAVE AN IMPORTANT ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUR PARTNER... AT A NEW RESTAURANT! OH, FRANK, HOW COULD YOU!



AND SO ONCE AGAIN DIANE TURNED TO THE ONLY PERSON SHE THOUGHT COULD GET HER HUSBAND'S LOVE BACK... HER MOTHER!



...BUT I CAN'T LEAVE HIM...I LOVE HIM TOO MUCH! I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG! ALL HE THINKS ABOUT IS FOOD!

FOOD, EH? I'VE GOT THE ANSWER! IF THIS DOESN'T BRING HIM BACK NOTHING WILL!

...I'LL PREPARE HIM A MEAL FIT FOR A KING! OF COURSE WE'LL TELL HIM YOU COOKED IT, BUT HE WON'T KNOW THE DIFFERENCE!

OH MOTHER, DO YOU THINK IT'LL WORK... **BUT IT HAS TO! IT HAS TO!**



ONCE AGAIN THE STAGE WAS SET! MAMA KNEW ALL THE ANSWERS, AND THIS TIME SHE WAS GOING TO MAKE SURE THAT NOTHING WENT WRONG...SHE WAS THERE TO SERVE THE MEAL JUST IN CASE...



DIANE WANTS THIS TO BE PERFECT, FRANK... SO I SAID I'D SERVE FOR HER...AFTER ALL, SHE'S SO TIRED FROM COOKING ALL DAY!

SURE SMELLS DELICIOUS! GOSH, HONEY... I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD COOK LIKE THIS!

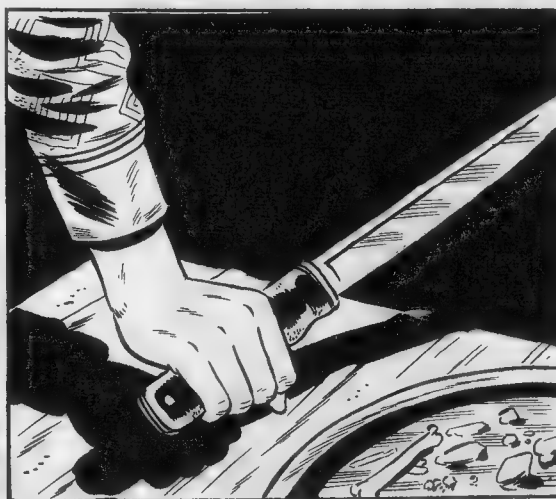
WELL...IT'S A LITTLE SECRET BETWEEN MOTHER AND MYSELF!

THERE WAS NO SOUND AS FRANK DUG IN... MOTHER AND DAUGHTER WAITED EAGERLY FOR THE VERDICT... A VERDICT THAT WOULD BRING FRANK'S HEART BACK TO DIANE!

WELL FRANK...HOW WAS IT? SHE A GOOD COOK?

NOT BAD...NOT BAD AT ALL! OF COURSE I'VE TASTED BETTER, BUT IT WAS ALL RIGHT!

THAT WAS THE STRAW THAT BROKE THE CAMEL'S BACK! MAYBE MAMA'S ADVICE WASN'T TOO GOOD... MAYBE SHE DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO KEEP A MAN... BUT ONE THING SHE DID KNOW WAS THAT FRANK HAD INSULTED HER COOKING! NO MAN COULD DO THAT!



NO MOTHER... NO! **DON'T!**



WELL YOU WANTED MY ADVICE, DIDN'T YOU! AND I GAVE IT TO YOU... **THE ONLY WAY TO A MAN'S HEART IS THROUGH HIS STOMACH!** HERE, TAKE IT!

THE END



SPRINGFIELD IS A SMALL TOWN..EVERYBODY KNEW EVERYBODY ELSE'S BUSINESS... ESPECIALLY THE THREE BREWSTER SISTERS..AND IF THEY DON'T KNOW IT, THEY MADE IT THEIR BUSINESS TO FIND OUT.. THAT'S WHY THEY WERE KNOWN AS THE...

The GOSSIPERS!



MORTELLARO

THEY FOUND THE NOTE ON THE BRIDGE LATER THAT NIGHT. LORRAINE WYATT... SHERIFF LYONS WENT TO THE BREWSTER HOME TO SEE IF THE THREE SISTERS COULD THROW ANY LIGHT WHY SHE SHOULD COMMIT SUICIDE... AFTER ALL ONCE SHE HAD WORKED FOR THEM!

HATE TO BOTHER YOU LADIES AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT, BUT IT'S ABOUT THAT WYATT GIRL.. SHE COMMITTED SUICIDE! MAYBE YOU CAN TELL US WHY!

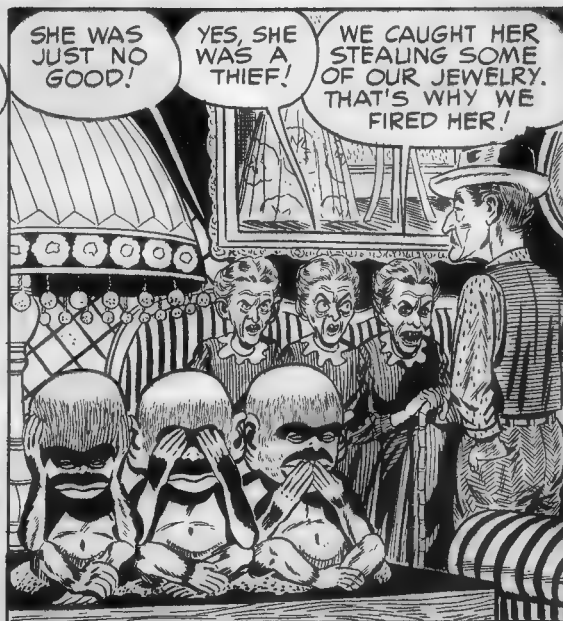
MIGHT HAVE FIGURED SHE'D TAKE THE EASY WAY OUT!

AFRAID TO FACE PEOPLE.. HMMPPH!

SHE WAS JUST NO GOOD!

YES, SHE WAS A THIEF!

WE CAUGHT HER STEALING SOME OF OUR JEWELRY. THAT'S WHY WE FIRED HER!



BEFORE WE GO ANY FURTHER, MAYBE I'D BETTER INTRODUCE THE BREWSTER, ER, GIRLS!



THIS IS AGATHA! NOTICE THOSE EARS...THE BETTER TO HEAR YOU WITH, IS HER ANSWER!



THIS IS AMANDA! THOSE EYES! UGGHH...THE BETTER TO SEE YOU WITH, MY CHILDREN!



AND FINALLY WE HAVE ALBERTA! ALBERTA OF THE TWISTED, UGLY MOUTH...THE BETTER TO...WELL, YOU KNOW THE REST!

AND THERE YOU HAVE THE THREE BREWSTER SPINSTERS...ALL AS UGLY AS SIN...IS IT ANY WONDER THAT THEY HATED LORRAINE WYATT? AFTER ALL, SHE WAS AS BEAUTIFUL AS THEY WERE GROTESQUE! BUT TO GET ON WITH OUR STORY, THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED WHEN THE BEAUTIFUL LORRAINE APPLIED FOR THE JOB OF HOUSEKEEPER AT THEIR, ER, MAUSOLEUM...



THEY HIRED HER EASILY ENOUGH... SHE CAME WELL-RECOMMENDED...

...AND I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THIS POSITION! I'M SURE YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED!

WE'D BETTER NOT BE! AND DON'T THINK THAT THE WORK WILL BE EASY...

BECAUSE IT WON'T! AND YOU CAN START RIGHT IN BY DOING THE FLOORS IN THE KITCHEN!



LORRAINE MUST HAVE NEEDED THE MONEY REAL BAD...TO PUT UP WITH THOSE THREE CRONES SHE HAD TO BE PRETTY DESPERATE!

YOU CALL THIS FLOOR WAXED! WHY, YOU HAVEN'T EVEN TOUCHED IT!

BUT I'VE BEEN WORKING ON IT ALL MORNING! I'VE...

DON'T TALK BACK! IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE JOB, JUST SAY SO!



BUT SOMEHOW LORRAINE PUT UP WITH THE THREE WITCHES...UNTIL ONE DAY...

NOW DON'T DENY IT... YOU'VE BEEN STEALING!

YOU INGRATEFUL WRETCH...AND SOME OF OUR BEST JEWELRY TOO!

BUT...BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND, I HAVEN'T STOLEN ANYTHING!



SHE'S LYING! I FOUND THESE IN HER ROOM!

IT'S SOME MISTAKE... I DIDN'T TAKE THEM! I DIDN'T!

GET OUT! IF THERE'S ANYTHING WE CAN'T STAND, IT'S A THIEF... AND A LIAR!



AND SO LORRAINE WAS FIRED! OF COURSE THE BREWSTER SISTERS COULDN'T REALLY PROVE THAT SHE HAD STOLEN THE JEWELRY, BUT IT WAS A SMALL TOWN AND WHO DO YOU THINK THE PEOPLE BELIEVED? LORRAINE? DON'T BE RIDICULOUS! WEREN'T THE BREWSTERS THE MOST RESPECTED FAMILY IN TOWN... WHY SHOULD THEY LIE!



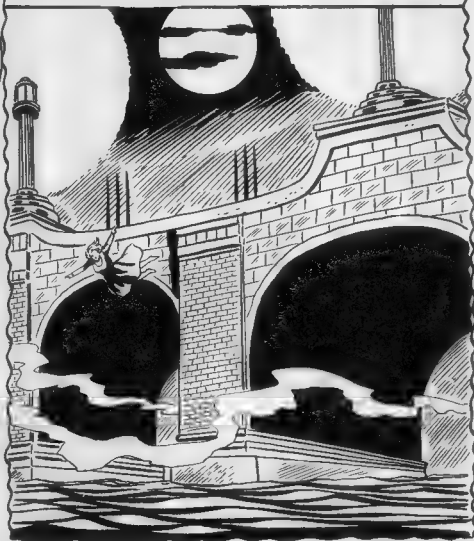
OF COURSE LORRAINE TRIED TO GET OTHER WORK... BUT DON'T FORGET, THIS WAS A SMALL TOWN... A VERY SMALL TOWN WITH A VERY SMALL MIND...

I'D LIKE TO HIRE YOU, MISS WYATT... BUT... WELL, WE JUST DON'T HAVE ANY ROOM RIGHT NOW!

WHY DON'T YOU SAY WHAT YOU REALLY MEAN... IT'S BECAUSE YOU THINK I'M A THIEF!



THAT'S HOW IT WENT WHERE EVER LORRAINE TRIED... UNTIL ONE NIGHT SHE COULDN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER... JUST COULDN'T TAKE IT!



WHY DID THEY DO IT? I'VE GOT A HUNCH, BUT THAT'S ALL IT REALLY IS... JUST A HUNCH! DID YOU TAKE A REAL LOOK AT THE THREE BREWSTER DAMES... UGLY, AREN'T THEY? BUT LORRAINE... AH, WHAT A DOLL... A DREAM! WELL; THAT'S MY THEORY... TAKE IT FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH..



AND THEN THERE WAS THE TIME DURING THE WAR AT THE RAILROAD STATION...

HOW DISGUSTING! I'D NEVER OF THOUGHT THAT OF ANNE HILL!

AND IN PUBLIC TOO!



THERE WAS A SMILE ON ANNE'S FACE AS SHE WALKED PAST THE THREE ZOMBIES... BUT NOT ON THEIRS!

I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HIM, BUT IT WAS WORTH A KISS TO SEND A SOLDIER OFF TO WAR HAPPY!

LOOK AT THE VALISE! AND SHE JUST GOT OFF THE TRAIN WITH THAT SOLDIER!

SHE'S BEEN AWAY FOR THE WHOLE WEEK-END! YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS!



AN INNOCENT KISS, THAT'S ALL IT WAS! BUT IT DIDN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO THEM... IT NEVER DOES TO THE GOSSIPS!



THAT'S ALL THE TOWN NEEDED... AT FIRST ANNE COULDN'T BELIEVE IT... THEN IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE...



THERE WAS NOTHING SHE COULD DO ABOUT IT... IT WAS TOO BIG FOR HER!



HOW DO YOU FIGHT SOMETHING LIKE THAT? YOU DON'T... YOU CAN'T!

BUT... IT... WASN'T... AT ALL... LIKE... THEY... SAY... I... DIDN'T... EVEN... KNOW... HIM... HE... WAS... JUST... A... LONESOME... SOLDIER!



BUT WHAT ELSE COULD SHE DO? WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

AND A FEW DAYS LATER...



CONVINCED YET? I THOUGHT SO... BUT WAIT, THAT'S NOT THE END OF MY STORY... THERE'S MORE YET! TAKE THE CASE OF HELEN GILLUS... THE WAITRESS! HELEN WASN'T AT ALL LIKE LORRAINE OR ANNE! SHE WAS SHY... QUIET... UNEDUCATED... BUT SHE HAD ONE THING IN COMMON... SHE WAS **BEAUTIFUL!**



BABY, YOU'RE A KNOCKOUT! GORGEOUS! WHAT DO YOU SAY... IS IT A DATE TONIGHT WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED WORK?

WELL, I DON'T KNOW... **ALL RIGHT, I'LL DO IT!** TONIGHT THEN!

LOOK AT HER... AND IN PUBLIC TOO...



HELEN DIDN'T SEE THE THREE BREWSTER SISTERS... HOW COULD SHE, SHE ONLY HAD EYES FOR ONE PERSON!

LOOK, SHE'S GOING WITH HIM!

AND A COMPLETE STRANGER TOO!

NO HE ISN'T... I'D KNOW THAT FACE ANYWHERE!



I REMEMBER SEEING IT IN A MAGAZINE... **THAT MAN IS WANTED FOR MURDER!**

YOU'RE RIGHT, I REMEMBER IT! BUT I THOUGHT HE WAS A BLOND! NEVER MIND THAT, IMAGINE, HER GOING AROUND WITH A KILLER!



THAT WAS ALL THEY NEEDED... NO EVIDENCE, NO WITNESSES, JUST THEIR OWN DIRTY, FILTHY MINDS... THE TOWN WOULD TAKE CARE OF THE REST... IT ALWAYS DID!



BUZZ... A MURDERER! BUZZ-BUZZ...

A DATE WITH A KILLER! BUZZ...

BUZZ... BUM!

SHE ISN'T SAFE! BUZZ-BUZZ...

PROBABLY HIS GIRL! BUZZ-BUZZ-

YES, THE TOWN WOULD TAKE CARE OF THE REST... AS SOON AS WORD GOT AROUND IT WOULD START!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY HELEN... BUT UNLESS I FIRE YOU PEOPLE WON'T COME IN HERE ANY MORE, SO I GOTTA LET YOU GO!

I UNDERSTAND, MR. WILSON... I UNDERSTAND!



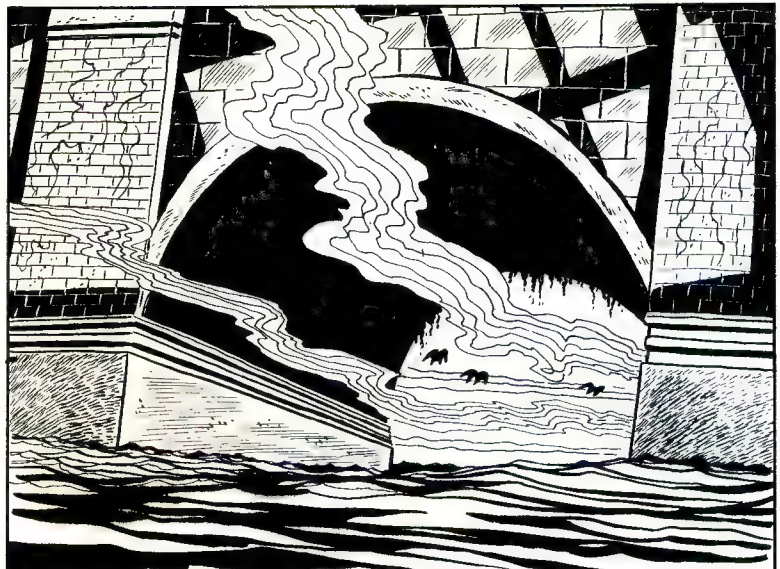
THAT SHE COULD UNDERSTAND, BUT WHAT HAPPENED NEXT WAS BEYOND EVEN HER COMPREHENSION!

AND DON'T COME BACK! IF YOU THINK I WANT A DAUGHTER WHO'S THE GIRLFRIEND OF A MURDERER, YOU'RE CRAZY!

SOB... SOB... OH HELEN, HOW COULD YOU! TO ME, YOUR OWN MOTHER!



HELEN COULDN'T FIGURE IT OUT...ALL SHE KNEW WAS THAT NOBODY WANTED HER...



AND THERE YOU HAVE MY STORY...BUT UNDERNEATH THESE SWIRLING WATERS LIES THE FINISH OF IT...

A FINISH WHICH LIES IN THE SWOLLEN, ROTTING, PUTRID FORMS WHICH SUDDENLY EMERGE FROM THE CURRENT...



...AND A SHORT TIME LATER FACE THE THREE GHOULS THAT HAVE CAUSED THEIR DEATHS... THE THREE BREWSTER SISTERS... **THE GOSSIPS!**



...NOW ALL IS PEACEFUL IN SPRINGFIELD... FOR THERE IS NO MORE GOSSIP... THEY HAVE LEARNED THAT THOU SHALT... **HEAR NO EVIL... SEE NO EVIL... SPEAK NO EVIL!**

The End

A FEW MOMENTS AGO THERE WERE TWO SHIPS: NOW THERE IS ONLY ONE! IN THESE SWIRLING, BUBBLING WATERS SOMEWHERE ON THE CARIBBEAN NEAR THE LESSER ANTILLES OF THE WEST INDIES... DEATH LURKS. THERE WAS A TASK... AND A SEARCH... AND NOW THERE IS A QUESTION...

TERROR of the DEEP



A U.S. FREIGHTER LAZILY EMBARKS ON ITS SCHEDULED ROUTE FROM PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD TO PUERTO RICO.



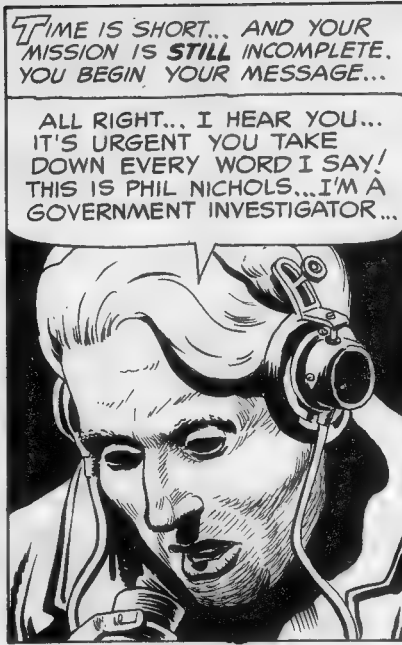
AN HOUR PASSES AND THE SHIP HAS NOT GONE MORE THAN FIFTEEN KNOTS N-NW, WHEN THE RADIOMAN BEAMS IN A STRANGE COMMUNICATION.



SUMMON THE CAPTAIN! QUICKLY!



THIS IS THE S.S. CITY OF ALTA... COME IN... COME IN...



TIME IS SHORT... AND YOUR MISSION IS **STILL** INCOMPLETE. YOU BEGIN YOUR MESSAGE...

ALL RIGHT... I HEAR YOU... IT'S URGENT YOU TAKE DOWN EVERY WORD I SAY! THIS IS PHIL NICHOLS... I'M A GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATOR...



THE OPERATOR HASTILY SCRIBBLES THE KEY WORDS IN EACH SENTENCE OF YOUR ACCOUNT.

JUST A FEW WEEKS AGO THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES SENT ME TO THE CARIBBEAN IN MY OWN SMALL CRAFT...

"I WAS APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE THE MYSTERIOUS AND COMPLETE **DISAPPEARANCES** OF SEVERAL LARGE AND SMALL SHIPS FROM THE AREA WEST OF THE **WINDWARD ISLANDS**."

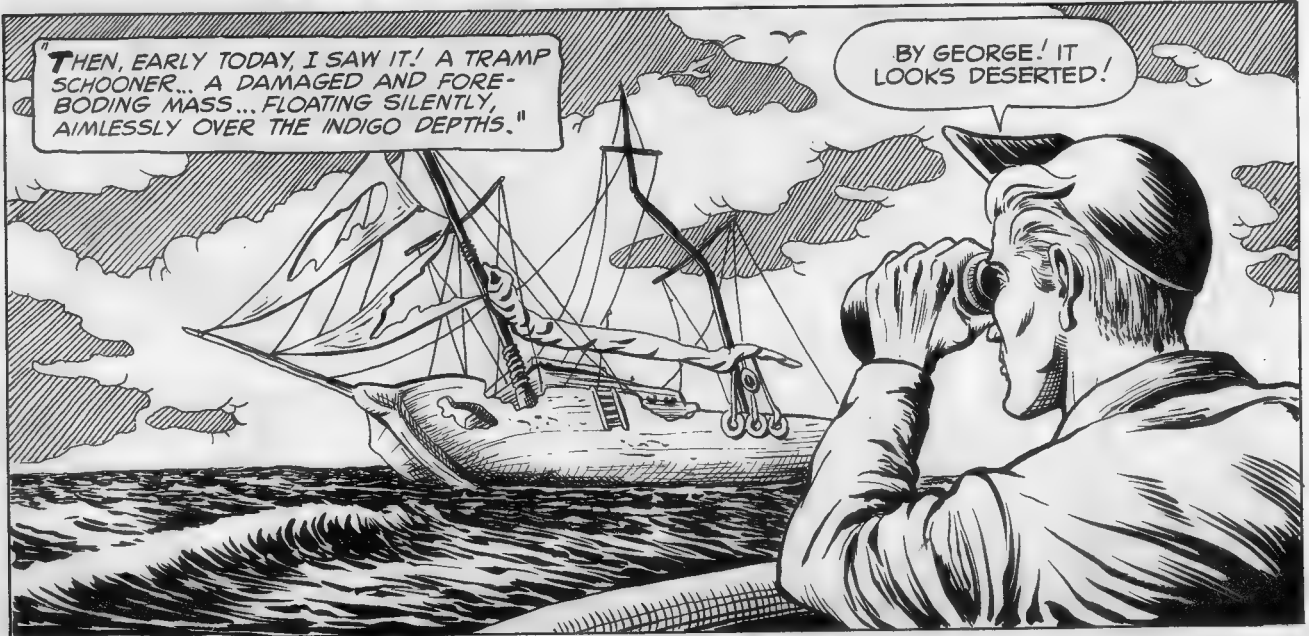
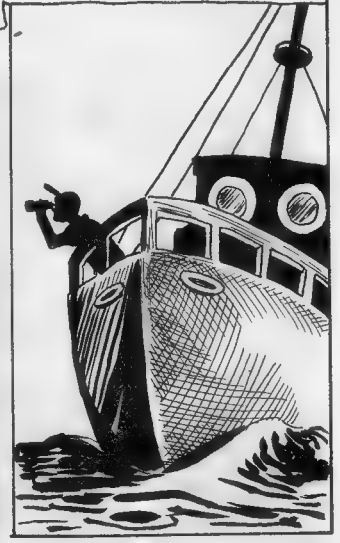
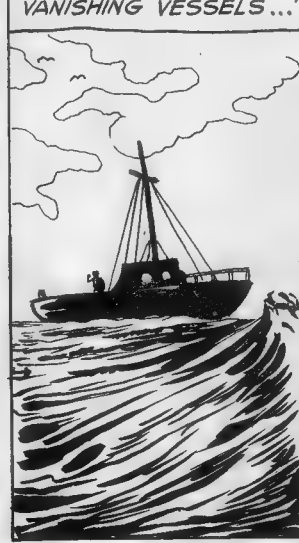


EXTRA!
EXTRA!

WE'VE GOT TO PUT A STOP TO THIS OBVIOUS FOUL PLAY!

Daily Star
ANOTHER FREIGHTER DISAPPEARS AT SEA!

"I HUNTED AND SEARCHED **FRUITLESSLY**, DAY IN AND DAY OUT IT WAS THE SAME STORY: NO CLUES... NOT A HINT AS TO THE **CAUSE** OF THE VANISHING VESSELS..."



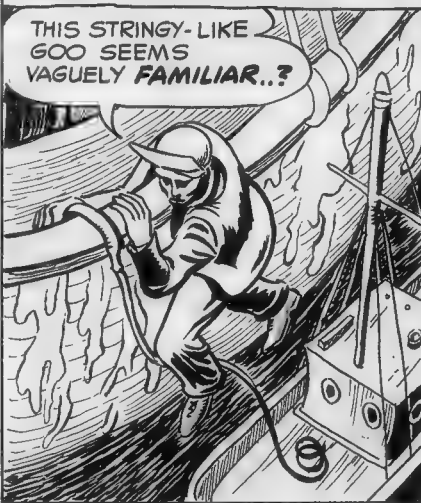
"THEN, EARLY TODAY, I SAW IT! A TRAMP SCHOONER... A DAMAGED AND FOREBODING MASS... FLOATING SILENTLY, AIMLESSLY OVER THE INDIGO DEPTHS."

BY GEORGE! IT LOOKS DESERTED!

"I STEERED MY BOAT NEAR THE STERN OF THE SHIP, CUT THE MOTOR, AND LET 'ER DRIFT TO THE HULL. MY EYES CAUGHT A THIN FILM OF **MUCID DEBRIS** FLOATING IN THE WATER."



"I THREW A GRAPPLING HOOK ON THE DECK OF THE TRAMP, PULLING MYSELF UP WAS DIFFICULT... MY FEET KEPT SLIDING ON THE **SLIMY WALLS** OF THE SHIP."



THIS STRINGY-LIKE GOO SEEMS VAGUELY **FAMILIAR..?**

"MY USUALLY **UNSENSITIVE** NOSE WAS **NOT FOOLED**, THOUGH..."

ALL THIS... AND THOSE PUTRID **RED BLOBS**... IT ALL SMELLS LIKE... LIKE **ROTTING FLESH!**



"I BARGED THROUGH A PARTLY-OPENED CABIN DOOR... AND STOPPED COLD!"



WHAT IN... ??

"I WAS HORRIFIED AT THE **BODIES** I SAW... PEOPLE WHOSE **FLESH** WAS **MOSTLY GONE**, BURNED OFF IN CHUNKS, AS THOUGH THEY HAD BEEN SOAKED IN ACID."



"I TRIED ANOTHER CABIN AND SAW THE SAME THING."



"I WASN'T CUT OUT FOR THAT SORT OF THING. I FELT A WAVE OF **NAUSEA** SWEEPING OVER ME, AND I STUMBLED BACK OUT TO THE OPEN DECK."



"I WAS STARTLED AS THE NOISE I MADE ATTRACTED **MOANS** FROM A THIRD CABIN."

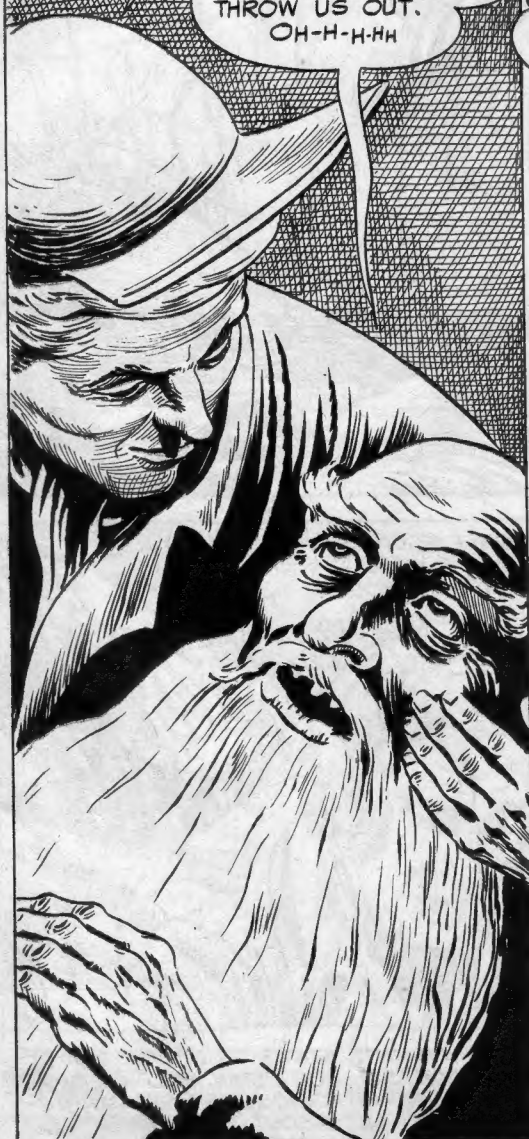


WHY... IT'S AN OLD MAN!



SPEAK UP, OLD FELLOW! WHAT HAPPENED?

...HEH...EXPLODING THOSE... THOSE DYNAMITE STICKS MADE... HEH ... COUGH... MADE IT THROW US OUT. OH-H-H-H-H



"...AND HE DIED. HIS DISCLOSURES DID NO MORE THAN CONFUSE ME FURTHER."

WHAT DID HE MEAN, 'MADE IT THROW US OUT'?



"THE FOUL-ODORED AIR FINALLY FORCED ME TO RETURN TO MY BOAT."

IT JUST **DOESN'T** MAKE SENSE.



"A FEW MOMENTS LATER A SUDDEN, GIGANTIC UPHEAVAL IN THE WATER NEARLY THREW ME OVERBOARD."

-GOOD LORD! WHAT'S THAT? IT... IT LOOKS LIKE...



"[I]T WAS THE MOST FRIGHTENING, THREATENING CREATURE I HAD **EVER SEEN**... A SEA DEMON THAT DWARFED MY CRAFT TO A MERE SPECK IN COMPARISON. MY NUMBED SENSES REASON IT MUST BE SOME **FAR ADVANCED** FORM OF THE SUPPOSEDLY EXTINCT **CARNIVOROUS** GENUS **PLESIOSAURUS**...



THE RECEIVING FREIGHTER LISTENS IN AWE...

GET THIS NOW... NOTIFY THE PROPER AUTHORITIES **IMMEDIATELY** TO SEND A LOADED **FUSED-TNT** DUMMY SHIP TO 14° BY 63°! THAT MONSTER **MUST BE EXPLODED AND DESTROYED!**

CONGRATULATIONS ON ESCAPING! YOU WERE INDEED FORTUNATE TO...



... BUT I **DIDN'T** ESCAPE! YOU SEE... MY BOAT AND I WERE... WERE SWALLOWED WHOLE!



The End

... AND **YOU** HAVE NO DYNAMITE STICKS TO **UPSET** THE CARNIVORE'S **STOMACH**. SO... YOU LISTEN, PHIL NICHOLS... YOU LISTEN TO THE SLOSHING ACIDIC JUICES GETTING NEARER, AND YOU REALIZE... YOU ARE ABOUT TO BE **DIGESTED!**

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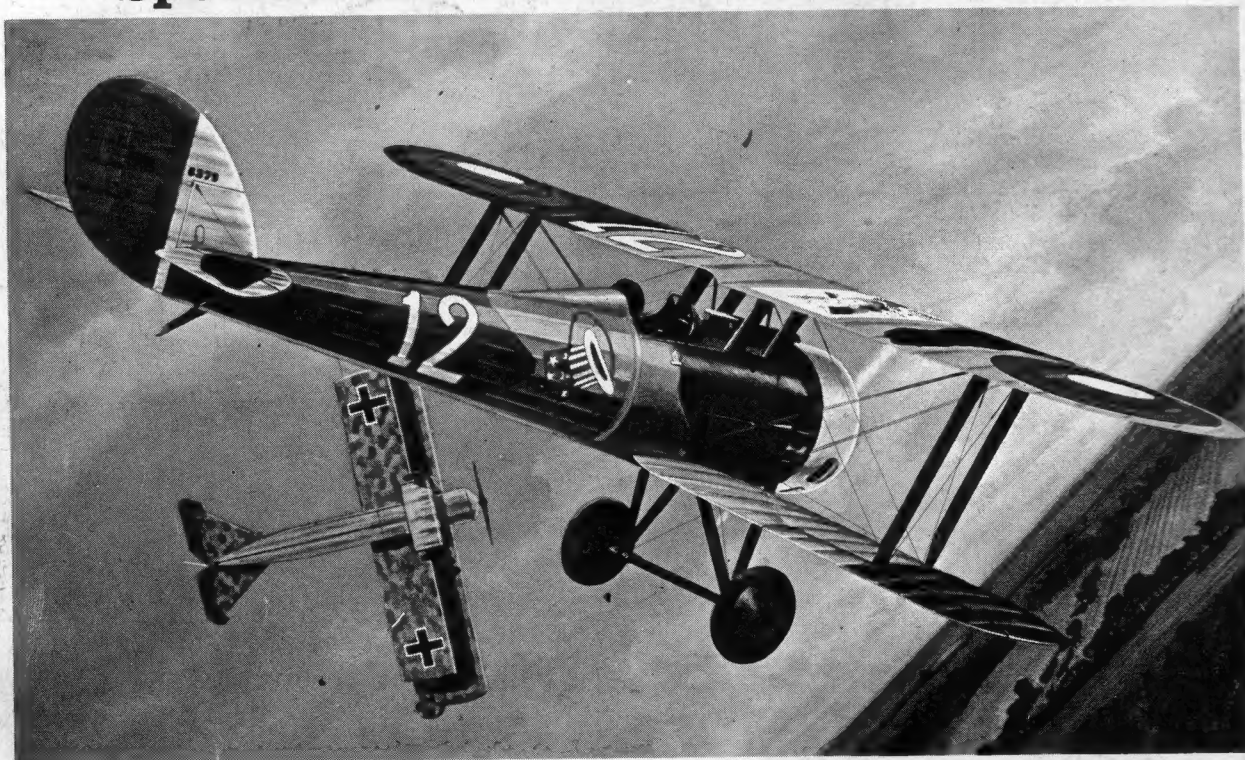
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